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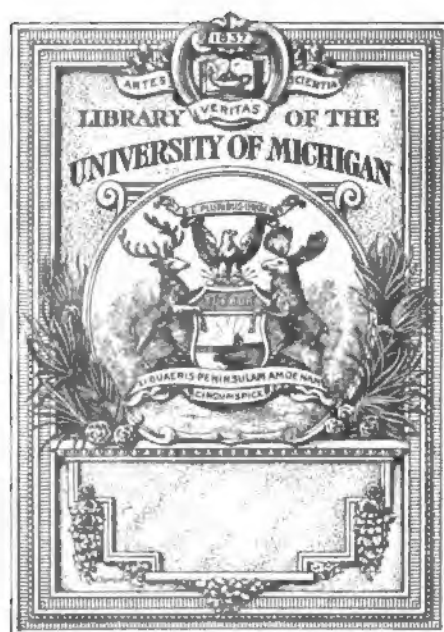
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## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Alexander Macmillan ; A Personal Reminiscence . . . . .	397
Anniversary in Berlin, The . . . . .	273
Battles of the Nive, The . . . . .	149
Bride Elect, A—	
Chapters I.—III. . . . .	53
,, IV.—VI. . . . .	81
,, VII.—IX. . . . .	161
,, X.—XII. ( <i>Conclusion</i> ) . . . . .	241
British Guiana . . . . .	471
British Navy, The Father of . . . . .	420
Captain Hind, The Remarkables of . . . . .	345
Cavalry, Our . . . . .	1
Country Doctor, From the Note-Book of a . . . . .	36
Craft of Hunting, The . . . . .	131-291
Dacquin, Mademoiselle . . . . .	211
Domestic Drama, A . . . . .	372
English Chronicle, A Great . . . . .	204
Failure of Philanthropy, The . . . . .	390
Forty Days, The . . . . .	454
Hawkwood, Sir John . . . . .	232
Irish Partridge, The . . . . .	43
Jowett, Some More Recollections of . . . . .	266
Mérimée, Prosper . . . . .	18
Missionaries in China . . . . .	10
Music Hath Charms . . . . .	217
My Friend Arcanieva . . . . .	139
Old Saint-Malo, Legends of . . . . .	182
Oxford in the Thirteenth Century . . . . .	99
Rambles of a Naturalist in Woolmer Forest . . . . .	365
Riding Recollections, Some . . . . .	192
Saint Bruno, Some Thoughts on . . . . .	72
Scottish Guard of France, The . . . . .	381
Seat of Justice, The . . . . .	198

	PAGE
Songs of Piedigrotta, The . . . . .	360
Stage-Struck . . . . .	122
Star of the Sea, The . . . . .	336
Stephanie de Liancourt . . . . .	401
Story of a Tin Mine, The . . . . .	435
Subterranean Adventure, A . . . . .	352
Swimmers, The . . . . .	30
Swiss Infantry, The . . . . .	106
Thomas Cathro's Clock . . . . .	321
Ticonderoga . . . . .	281
Tourist Ticket, A . . . . .	299
Unfinished Books . . . . .	444
Virginian Sportsman, A . . . . .	223
Wanted—A Dead Letter Office . . . . .	309
Wings of a Dove, The . . . . .	462
Yam Custom, The (A Tale of Ashantee) . . . . .	115
Yellow Clay, A Day on the . . . . .	427



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# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER, 1895.

## OUR CAVALRY.

It is curious to note, alike in the past and the present history of England, the attitude of neglect invariably assumed by the country towards her Army. The reasons assigned for this fact are never very adequate. There is of course a traditional jealousy, handed down from the days of Cromwell and the later Stuarts, of all standing armies; a jealousy which, though utterly obsolete and absurd, is still cherished by the ignorant and foolish, and finds open expression in the Annual Army Act. For there are yet many Englishmen who try to persuade themselves that we do not possess a standing army, and could dispense with such an article if necessary. Again there is the deep-rooted prejudice among the lower classes against wearers of the red coat at large, a heritage which, in spite of the honourable estate accorded to military men during the Civil War, may be traced from the ill-treatment of our soldiers in the days of Elizabeth. Simple parents still lament over the enlistment of a son as though the barrack-yard were a convict-prison; and most unfortunately the thoughtlessness of the reformers of 1870, in turning their first batch of reservemen adrift upon the country without taking pains to prepare it for so novel an experiment, has given this prejudice a new lease of life.

No. 433.—VOL. LXXIII.

But the true reason probably lies elsewhere. All the battles of the British Army have been fought abroad. We have never been threatened, for instance, with such a wave of invasion as was rolled back by the French at Jemappes and Valmy; we have never seen the train of the victorious wounded toiling back over our own country roads, nor buried the victorious dead in our own green fields. We have had to take the histories of our wars where we could find them, and we have rarely found them well. There is in truth no military history in our language of the first rank, excepting only that of Napier. The rest are for the most part either so distinctly personal that they must be considered as autobiographies, or so purely technical as to weary and perplex the lay reader. We have no Brantôme to tell us of our great soldiers of three centuries past; and worse than that, no Smollett, no Michael Scott, no Marryat of the Army.

Recently, however, the retirement of the Duke of Cambridge has turned public attention to the imperfections of our military system. There is for the moment a real interest in the Army, and a desire to make good its defects; and this interest will probably endure for a few months until the civilian reader, choked as usual by



a profusion of technical details, abandons in despair the task of comprehending what has been done, what is a-doing, and what remains to do. It is therefore with the perhaps too ambitious design of setting forth in intelligible language what is going forward in one branch of the military service that the present paper is written. That branch, as our title indicates, is the Cavalry.

The British Infantry has been repeatedly lauded by foreigners as the finest in the world, not (in at least one instance) without a thanksgiving that there was fortunately little of it. No one, least of all the great Wellington, has hitherto found a good word to speak of the British Cavalry. We have produced no great cavalry officer since Cromwell; and no action of our mounted troops is known to the majority of Englishmen except the charges of the Scots Greys and the Household Cavalry at Waterloo and of the two Brigades at Balaklava. Yet the recruits attracted to the mounted service have always been, and are now more than ever superior to those of the Infantry; our horses are better than those of any other nation, and our men ride them better than could any men in Europe. There is no reason why the British Cavalry should not enjoy as great a reputation as the British Infantry; but it does not, and the question naturally arises why it should not.

Let us glance for a moment at the history of our Cavalry. It may be said, for our purpose, to have been originally modelled on Cromwell's two famous regiments, and to have found its first definite form in the ten regiments of Horse and ten companies of Dragoons established by the Act of 1645. Dismissing the Dragoons, who were only mounted Infantry, let us glance at these ten regiments, and note first that the organisation by

ments was in itself a novelty, the

Parliamentary Horse at the opening of the war having consisted of seventy-five independent units, each called a troop, and each under the command of a captain. The new regiments consisted of six hundred men under command of a Colonel; and they were organised in six troops, each one hundred strong. Each troop had three officers, Captain, Lieutenant, and Cornet, and was distributed for purposes of administration into three divisions, for each of which one of these officers was individually responsible, while the Captain of course was further responsible for the whole. Thus in the muster-rolls of the time a troop of Cavalry appears in three parallel columns; the Captain's division on the right, the Cornet's in the centre, and the Lieutenant's on the left; each officer's name standing at the head of his division with his corporal's name next below it. We ask the reader to note three points only: (1) The reform that substituted regiments for independent troops; (2) the large strength of troops, and consequently of regiments; (3) the admirable system which gave each officer command of a definite number of men, for whose efficiency he was directly answerable. Of drill we shall say nothing, for men had not yet grasped the principle that horses who have four legs require a different system for manœuvre from men who have two. Rapidity of tactical movement did not exist, because, with the current ideas of drill, it was impossible.

Let us now pass over a century to a great epoch in our military history, the time of the Seven Years' War, and briefly follow a typical regiment, which the present writer has by chance had occasion to study closely, through a part of its history. The corps was raised shortly after the victory of Minden in 1759, and its establishment was fixed at four troops of seventy-five rank and file apiece.

Recruits came in fast ; in less than a month two more troops were added, and the strength was presently increased to a total of six hundred and seventy-eight non-commissioned officers and men. Here is the regiment of Cromwell's day reproduced and even enlarged ; and moreover it has learned to manœuvre. For men had grown to recognise that the only feasible method of manœuvring long lines of horse is to tell off the ranks into small divisions which, wheeling off independently to right or left, break the line into a succession of small flexible columns, and these again, when the desired change of front or position has been effected, can be wheeled into line once more. But as usually happens when such novelties are introduced, the movements were far too numerous and complicated, requiring much pains to master and much practice to execute, and too apt on this account to be considered not as merely a means but as the beginning and end of all duty. The regulations also directly encouraged prettiness and precision in field-movements, and tended inevitably to degrade them into a pedantic exercise, which after a time became a positive curse. But the most deplorable of all changes was the loss of the old apportionment of responsibility among troop-officers, which had vanished in the interval since the Civil War. There was a new officer in each regiment called the Adjutant, and if there were work to be done in the regiment, he did it.

Our typical corps has hardly been put into shape when the war is ended by the Peace of Paris. Forthwith the Army is reduced, and our regiment, cut down to a fourth of its former strength, is scattered about Ireland in as many as six detachments, some of them numbering no more than thirty men. This vicious practice (as to which we shall presently

speak further) was practically a reversion to the system of independent troops, which had been found wanting in the Civil War. It was, however, usual all over the United Kingdom, and perhaps even necessary at a time when police as yet were not, and the means of communication were slow and difficult ; for the military was the only force at hand to keep the peace in case of riot or disturbance.

Our corps, notwithstanding all difficulties, maintains its reputation, and at the outbreak of the American War in 1775 is selected first for foreign service. But its strength amounts to barely one hundred and twenty men, and what is to be done ? Deplete two other weak regiments to make good deficiencies ; send it abroad with a total strength of two hundred and twenty-five men and one hundred and eighty-six horses, and despatch an officer to America to purchase remounts. The officer arrives, of course too late, to find that the Americans have been beforehand with him and that no horses can be procured. A second regiment of Cavalry is sent out from England with remounts, but as over four hundred horses out of four hundred and fifty die on the voyage, matters are little improved. The General clamours loudly for mounted troops, and finally the second cavalry regiment turns over the whole of its horses and many of its men to our original corps and embarks for England. Thus at last, after desperate efforts and at great sacrifice, our regiment reaches an effective strength of four hundred mounted troopers. "It was a hundred years ago," as Mrs. Shandy says. True, it was ; and we beg our readers to remember it.

Twenty years pass, and our regiment returns in 1797 from the West Indies so thinned by yellow fever as to be a mere skeleton. It is strengthened by a draft from another corps, but having (as indeed it still

has) an extraordinary power of attracting recruits, it quickly recovers itself, and in 1801 parades with the magnificent strength of a thousand men, ten troops of the old establishment of one hundred men apiece, all superbly mounted, a sight for gods and men. This is what a good English cavalry regiment can do if it is permitted. But the Peace of Amiens is presently signed, and the strength is at once diminished to eight troops; is indeed in process of being weakened to six, when the renewal of the war puts an end to all reduction. Thenceforward for twenty years our regiment does duty abroad, and there retains, notwithstanding appalling losses from sickness, a fixed establishment of about eight hundred men.

The period of Indian service expires; most of the men are turned over to other regiments in the country, and the remainder, a mere two hundred, sail for England. Two thirds of these are immediately discharged or invalided on landing, and with a bare fifty men for the nucleus of a new corps, the officers set to work to bring the regiment up to its new establishment of six troops, three hundred men and two hundred horses. It is the opening of the reign of George the Fourth: the country is still suffering from the exhaustion of a long war; and the Army is hidden away as far as possible and left to take care of itself in all matters except that of dress, whereon the King exhausts all the resources of a vulgar imagination. The lessons of the Peninsula are forgotten, and the training of the Cavalry, most of which is as usual scattered broadcast in detachments, consists in drill of the stiffest and absurdest kind, a legacy from that most mischievous of pedants, David Dundas, better known from his master-failing as "Old Pivot."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> His classical work is a large quarto volume dated 1788.

Officers cry loudly for reform in the Military Magazines, but in vain; when suddenly the peace of forty years breaks up, and we are face to face with the Crimean War.

Our regiment is ordered to embark on foreign service, but, being through no fault of its own unprepared, is obliged to leave two of its six troops behind to form a depot, and finally sails, even after reinforcement by the usual drafts, with the miserable strength of two hundred and fifty men. Before it reaches the Crimean peninsula these numbers have been reduced by sickness to less than two hundred, and it goes into action at Balaklava, even so not the weakest regiment of its brigade, with less than one hundred and fifty men in the ranks. Having been practically annihilated in the battle, its establishment is raised to eight troops, and it comes home four hundred strong. Thereupon it is at once reduced to six troops, and the process of diminution is in full swing, when it receives orders to prepare for service against the mutineers in India. Up goes the establishment again to ten troops: no less than five regiments are drained to bring it up to strength; and thus reinforced by a hundred and thirty-two men, strangers to their officers and to each other, the regiment sails for Bombay four hundred and fifty strong. There for the present let us leave it.

But all this, it will be said, is an old story. What have we to do with the century from 1759 to 1859? Was not the army reformed in 1870 and the succeeding years? Certainly there has been reform in the Army; it is sometimes called reorganisation, but this is a mistake, for the Army after more than two centuries still awaits its first true organisation for its principal business of war. We all know how the reformers dealt with the Infantry; how they



found it an aggregate of individual battalions, incoherent as an army, and strong only in the regimental spirit, that *esprit de corps* which had gained for it its many victories; how finding this spirit in the way of their schemes they swept it away with the lightest of hearts, and destroyed the sole source of our former strength without reflecting what they should put in its place; so that the last state of our Infantry is on the whole perhaps even worse than the first.

But the Cavalry the reformers left severely alone. It consists, as before, of three regiments of Life-Guards, seven of Dragoon-Guards, three of Dragoons, five of Lancers, and thirteen of Hussars, with numbers, titles, and facings intact. Short service indeed was introduced, as into the whole Army. Further, in the course of the past twenty years the establishment of regiments has been fixed permanently at eight troops, or rather at four squadrons, for the organisation by squadrons has now been definitely adopted; the yoke of Old Pivot has been shaken off, and the system of drill has been altered to meet modern ideas. Finally it has been recognised by the study of the German Cavalry in 1870-71, that the functions of men and officers of modern Cavalry have a wider scope than the ideal execution of parade-movements. Thus much we have learned in a hundred years, and so far as it goes the lesson is decidedly to the good.

But for the most part, as we have said, the reformers have left the Cavalry severely alone; and, as we proceed to prove the statement, readers will see that we have not referred to past centuries without a purpose. Let us return to our typical regiment. We saw it in 1763 in Ireland dispersed in five or six detachments: in Ireland again, rather more than a century later, we find it quartered once more in detachments

at Ballinacollig, Limerick, Cork, Fermoy, Clogheen. Coming forward twenty years or so into quite recent days, we find it scattered about in one year at Leeds, Birmingham, and Liverpool, in another at Hounslow, Kensington, and Hampton Court. Going deeper into the matter we find from an article in THE JOURNAL OF THE UNITED SERVICE INSTITUTION<sup>1</sup> (to which we here once for all acknowledge our obligations) that though there are twenty-one regiments of Cavalry at home, there are but sixteen headquarter-stations for the whole of them, while detachments must be found for no fewer than twenty-one stations separate from headquarters. Thus half the regiments are split up into distinct bodies. What does this mean? It means that we have not yet grasped the lesson taught by Cromwell that coherent regiments are better than isolated troops; that, though improved police, railways, and telegraphs have long done away with the need for sprinkling the country with petty military bodies, we suffer our Cavalry to be ruined in order to save rich municipalities the expense of maintaining a small force of mounted constables. The gain of a few votes is weighed against the loss of an army, and the Army, in the sight of sneering Europe and of sluggish, complacent England, solemnly kicks the beam.

For these detachments are a curse to officers and men, and most mischievous, if not fatal, to efficiency and discipline. What is a regiment? It is as truly as any University, Inn, or College an ancient and honourable Society, formed for the purpose of training young men in a great and noble profession. It has its purpose to attain, its traditions to cherish, its reputation to uphold, its unity to preserve, and to this end, over and above all Queen's

<sup>1</sup> By Colonel Graves, Twentieth Hussars; vol. xxxix. No. 210. August, 1895.

Regulations, it possesses its own code of laws and customs, both written and unwritten, which goes by the name of the regimental system. If a regiment have a bad system, though it may be raised for a time to the highest perfection by a good commanding officer, yet it will inevitably relapse into its former low estate as soon as an incompetent commander succeeds him. If it have a good system it will maintain its efficiency through a whole generation of useless colonels. Now how is a regimental system to be kept unimpaired if the regiment is parted into small pieces for whole years together? Take the case of a public school, which in many respects affords the nearest parallel to a regiment, and let us select Harrow as one which enjoys no exceptional advantages, but is remarkable for its discipline and *esprit de corps*. Suppose that the head-master with his house and one or two more were left at Harrow, but was ordered to detach one house to Watford, another to St. Albans, two more to Hertford, another to London, and another to Richmond. What would be the inevitable consequence? Surely that Harrow would lose all unity, that it would cease to be a public school and sink into a congeries of private schools, differing in tone, in merit, and even in system, according to the character of the master in charge, and absolutely wanting in coherence. Moreover, every one would admit that to require of the head-master any other result than this would be the height of absurdity and injustice.

The results are precisely the same in a regiment. If the officer in command of the detachment be lazy, the odds are overwhelming that the whole detachment will become lazy likewise. An energetic subaltern may save it, if the regimental system be good, but even so always at the cost of discipline, for the men will

turn to him as the true commander; while, if his superior be jealous and foolish as well as lazy, he will either be driven mad or himself become lazy from sheer despair. If on the contrary the officer be a good man and a zealous soldier, there is another danger little less great. There are few men who do not enjoy the feeling of being their own masters and the sense of independent command; the abler they are the more they will delight in the feeling, and the more strongly they will impress their own idiosyncrasies upon those who serve under them. Such a man works up his detachment to the highest pitch of excellence possible to him, introducing, it may be, a few ideas of his own, new but excellent in themselves; he is justifiably proud of his little command, and grows to look upon it as a thing apart. Likely enough he has with him none but young non-commissioned officers, the old hands having been secured by his seniors who wish to be saved all trouble on other detached stations. He trains up his young ones to do the higher work entrusted to them; they catch the infection and work with a will, for, like the officer, they exult in the freedom and responsibility of holding greater office than is assigned to them at headquarters. But the day comes when the regiment is reunited. The officer sinks from superior to subordinate command. Very likely through the return of some senior from employment on the staff he loses the satisfaction even of commanding a squadron. He can no longer take his own line; his little improvements are isolated in the regiment, are scoffed at, neglected, and abolished. His interest in his work wanes, he grows impatient and discontented. The young non-commissioned officers also loathe the return from higher to lower work and the degradation, as it seems to them, to their former

dependence. There is every chance that all alike will become grumblers, and presently leave the service, which thus through sheer vice of system loses its best men. Nor, it may be guessed, can the change be without an evil and unsettling effect upon every private in the regiment.

But of the two evils the likelier is that the detachment will grow lazy, for in many both of the headquarters and outquarters that lie in large towns there is no drill-ground, and it is necessary to waste hours in marching through miles of streets before any practical work can be done at all. Whatever an officer's energy, he is always hampered by the weakness of his numbers as to the scope and variety of the instruction that he can impart, and by the consequent difficulty of interesting men in their lesson. Occasionally too he may be embarrassed by some egregious blunder at the district's headquarters. For instance, we once saw an officer sent with a detachment to Hampton Court and kept for several days without any horses. There he was, with thirty or forty men and nothing on earth for them to do, with no stables, no possibility of drill, and every temptation surrounding his men to induce them to break out from pure lightness of heart (as is very common on arrival at a small out-station), and bring trouble on themselves and disgrace to the regiment. But the idea of having a detachment at Hampton Court to guard two hundred women is an absurd anomaly. There is no means of excluding the public from the barrack-yard, and the populace has been known positively to stop the penal drill of defaulters by its hooting,—a fine encouragement to discipline!

So much for this abominable system and its effect on our Cavalry. We have asserted without fear of contradiction that a head-master whose

school should be treated like a regiment of Cavalry would be acquitted of the consequences. A colonel is not acquitted. The country may place his regiment out of his reach, but he is still responsible. Colonel Graves gives an example of a regiment which in the course of the decade 1879–1889 passed through the hands of six commanding officers, of whom the first three never had their entire regiment on parade during the whole term of their command; the fourth had them concentrated for but three months, the fifth for but five, and the sixth for a year. And this kind of thing is still going on unaltered. Any Cavalry officer can tell with little trouble the number of regiments that have not stood together in line for months and even years. From time to time, however, their turn comes for concentration; they are sent out to the yearly manœuvres, and critics complain that they are not up to the mark and that too much time, which should be devoted to higher training, has to be given up simply to drill. How can it be otherwise when their colonels never have a chance even of seeing them, and their officers have not so much as ground to drill them on?

Let us now pass to another matter on which we laid stress in reviewing the past history of our typical regiment,—the strength of our various Cavalry corps when called upon for active service. We saw that on no single occasion was it strong enough to take the field without drafts both of men and horses from other regiments. Is it otherwise now? In 1882 (we quote Colonel Graves) four regiments were required for the Egyptian War, with four hundred and twenty-four men and horses to each, or a total of, say, seventeen hundred in all. Not a very great force, one would imagine; but it was more than we could produce,

for there were not four regiments with the required strength of horses fit for active service to be found in the kingdom. Accordingly four regiments were sent out, with three hundred and sixty-five horses gathered from every quarter of the compass. One regiment was made out of the three Household Cavalry regiments, and the rest were supplied by stripping bare certain other regiments that remained at home. One of these gave up two hundred horses; another was left with a little over a hundred, and these of course the least efficient in the regiment. Drafts of men were also taken in the same fashion wherever they could be found, and in the first reinforcement sent out there were men literally from every one of the twenty-one regiments at home. In fact there was not a single real regiment there, but a collection of deputations from the British Cavalry at large; in the most ironical sense a representative force,—representative of a vicious system and of a blind and foolish British public.

In 1885, again, one regiment was required; but instead of a single regiment complete, a wing, that is to say a nominal half-regiment, was sent out from two regiments. As a matter of fact two regiments were really sent out; for when one wing had been brought up to war-strength at the expense of the other, there was little remaining but a depot. At the time of the Crimean War, which military reformers are so fond of denouncing, we had at any rate the courage to send two hundred and fifty away and confess that it represented the whole of a regiment; but in these days, though the case is precisely the same, we say that we have sent out a wing, to delude the public with the idea that we have another wing equally strong waiting at home.

So much for 1882 and 1885; is the condition of things any better now?

We greatly doubt it. It was indeed stated in the House of Commons that certain regiments on a war-footing had five hundred and eighty-one men and five hundred and eleven horses, while others had six hundred and thirty men and five hundred and thirty horses. But, as Colonel Graves says, where are they? And he answers, on paper only. The largest barracks in the kingdom can only just accommodate four hundred and twenty-four horses, and even if these barracks be full, there must needs be many horses too young or too old for active service. Even therefore if the men be as numerous as stated (and it is certain that many of them would also be unfit for active service), there would be a difference of a hundred horses to be made up somehow with endless confusion and difficulty. If again, from want of barrack-space, these strong regiments are split up into detachments, then we unhesitatingly assert that they are unfit, for reasons already given, to take the field for war.

As a matter of fact eleven of the Cavalry regiments at home muster between them, by admission, less than three thousand horses, from which again a proportion must be deducted of inefficients, too young or too unsound for active service. It would be an extreme assumption to suppose that these regiments could turn out more than two hundred and fifty efficient men and horses apiece in the event of a declaration of war, and then the aggregate strength of the whole eleven would barely exceed that of four French regiments. Moreover, if it were decided to send the less weak regiments abroad, these eleven would perforce be stripped of most of their horses and of a good many men in order to fill up gaps, and would be practically reduced to shadows.

But where, it may be asked, is the Reserve? Now there is an aphorism

as old as Vegetius and of profound truth, which says that every man not in active military training is a recruit. The proverb is of double significance in respect of our Cavalry which, as has been pointed out, is insufficiently trained at home even before the men are passed into the Reserve. In fact our Cavalry at home can hardly be said to have more than a potential, if indeed a potential, existence. The numbers even on paper are absurdly small in proportion to the Infantry; its regiments, even on a war-footing, are weaker by more than a hundred men than the weakest regiments of Foreign Powers, while in time of peace they are merely skeletons. There are too few men for the officers, too few horses for the men, and too little barrack-accommodation and training-ground for all three. Even if our Cavalry were all that the War Office would have us believe and more; if every regiment were up to war-strength, fully manned, fully horsed, and fully trained, it would still be too weak for its work. As it is, we could only put into the field a ridiculously small force, heterogeneous and half-trained, the officers unacquainted with their men, and the men ignorant alike of their work, their comrades, and their horses.

So it was a hundred and fifty years ago, so it is now, and so it ever will be until the British public awakes, or is rudely awakened by disaster, to the danger of the position. It is no fault of men or officers; it is the fault of a country which holds a party's triumph dearer than the efficiency of an army, which would sooner see whole regiments ruined than one vote lost. The Cavalry has never failed us yet, says the idle public; look at Waterloo and Balaklava. Has it ever tried to

read of its failures; has it ever considered that the Greys at Waterloo marred their performance by virtually putting themselves out of action after their charge, and that this was due to imperfect training; has it ever reflected that the six hundred at Balaklava, if they had represented a strong homogeneous regiment instead of five fragments of regiments, might have been kept together under one head, no matter how many superior officers had fallen, and would not have been reduced to units, straggling and impotent for all their gallantry, by the mere disappearance of the Brigadier? It is surely time that we abandoned the mistakes of the American War of 1775 and put our Cavalry on a proper footing, with strong regiments, provided everywhere with proper barracks and adequate ground for drill and manœuvre. It will be expensive, no doubt; but surely it is more expensive to keep a number of officers without men to command, and very absurd (no country but our own could be guilty of such absurdity) as well as very expensive to pay for untrained men as though they were trained. We have increased marvelously in wealth and population in the past two hundred and fifty years; but the highest ideal of the British Cavalry lies behind us in the year 1645,—every regiment of six hundred horse, every troop one hundred strong, every officer responsible for at least thirty men. When this is done for our twenty-one regiments at home (though five squadrons of one hundred and twenty will do as well as six troops of one hundred), then, and not till then, we may say that England possesses a force, and still none too strong a force, of Cavalry.



## MISSIONARIES IN CHINA.

THE conditions under which missionary work is carried on in China are peculiar, and are but imperfectly understood by those who have never visited the country and been brought into personal contact with the Chinese. The population is divided into two sharply defined classes, the very rich and the very poor; the middle classes, which are a distinctive feature of most other countries, are in China an insignificant quantity. But though the poor with all their ignorance and superstition are the more amenable to external influences, for good as well as for bad, they betray, in common with their rulers, a most rooted aversion to foreigners. The days of Chinese exclusiveness have departed, never, we believe, to return; but the supreme self-complacency of the people as a whole, their lofty pretensions, their affectation of goodness, wisdom, and more or less beneficent power, are still one of their most striking characteristics, and while naturally more marked in the words and actions of the official class, may still be detected in the most wretched coolie who loads a ship's bunkers with coal. The latter's inborn animosity towards strangers does not of course show itself much outside China, where the conditions are naturally reversed. It rather develops into an unuttered contempt, and a determination to get the better of the foreigner in every conceivable way, even if it be only in the washing of linen. In China itself this animosity is fanned and kept alive by the expressed contempt and the active opposition of the governing classes. For among his many good

and bad qualities the average Chinaman possesses that of being quick to take a hint. If his masters are passive (which is not often the case) in their attitude towards Europeans, he also is passive: if his masters show active dislike, he does the same; and the result is in its mildest form the flinging of mud and stones, and in its worst such outbreaks as that which occurred the other day at Kucheng. This outbreak supplies us with a good illustration of the quality to which we have referred. When the lawless classes in one city, instigated by official sanction, commit outrages with impunity, their friends in other cities are always ready to emulate their example. Had the Government promptly ordered an open inquest without fear or favour at Kucheng, there would have been no trouble at Foochow nor fear of any at Canton.

China, as all the world knows, has a very ancient civilisation and a very high moral code. It is only within comparatively recent years that the light of Christianity has been carried there. Confucianism has no doubt wrought much good in its time, but it has outlived its moral power; its body is there still, but such soul as it had seems to have departed out of it. Confucius threw no light on any of the questions which have a world-wide and eternal interest; he gave no real impulse to religion; he had no sympathy with progress. It does not seem, however, as if Dr. Legge's prophecy that his influence would wane is likely soon to be fulfilled. Putting Christianity aside for the moment,

China would assuredly fare better if she followed out her great philosopher's principles. It is because her people preach so glibly of morality and virtue, and neglect to practise them, that the Empire is the morally rotten body that we see it to be. The assumption of universal philanthropy and far-reaching philosophic principles, which are brought out even in all the official documents, must appear to any straightforward man to be the very apotheosis of cant, when these high professions are viewed in the light of actual accomplishment. Even their teachers, with all their magnificent platitudes, were extremely ignorant and narrow-minded men. It has been said of them, and said rightly, that they knew nothing outside China, that they had no imagination, and that they did not wish to learn. The Empire of the Son of Heaven was enough for them, and satisfied their highest aspirations. To such men, and to the disciples of such men, what did it signify what the Fan Kwei, the Foreign Devils, thought or did, so long as they kept away and gave no trouble; or, if they were bound to come, so long as they acknowledged the sovereignty of the Emperor by performing the recognised ceremonies? It is easy, when one has grasped the real situation, to understand the attitude of the educated Chinese to Christian missions. "Who are these barbarian beasts," they ask, "that they should aspire to lead us into the right paths? They send us for their own benefit a poisonous drug; where is their benevolence? They send their fleets and armies to despoil other nations; what becomes of their pretensions to rectitude? They allow men and women to mix in society and to walk arm-in-arm through the streets; where is their morality? They reject the doctrines of the ancient kings; where is their

wisdom? Deficient, therefore, in four out of the five cardinal virtues, how can these barbarians expect to reform others?" We have seen this argument advanced in a score or more of Chinese tracts. Will any one, who has been in the country and studied the people for even a brief space of time, say that he has never heard the same argument advanced by his native friends?

It must be apparent that, under such adverse conditions as these, the task of our missionaries in China is an unusually difficult one; and it is most creditable to their zeal and to the fervour of their convictions that these exceptional difficulties should have even increased their numbers. Bringing the beauties of Christianity to the heart of a Chinese is a vastly different matter from bringing the same to, let us say, a South Sea Islander. In the one instance you have a gross and idolatrous savage, who more often than not has a feeling of admiration for a white man, provided he is not a trader; when you have gained that savage's good-will, half the battle for Christianity has been won. In China you have a people whose settled conviction it is that the ultimate purpose of your presence there is to kill them off and confiscate their property; who hardly discriminate between missionaries and other Western people, but class them all in the one hated category of Foreigners; and who have their own striking religious beliefs and rites. The predominant religion of Taouism is consecrated by the practice of centuries and the adhesion of their own forefathers. Both these considerations count for much, count for everything, in fact, with the Chinese. They are the most conservative nation in the world, and they are strict in the worship of their ancestors. Their conservatism is proverbial; and it is

one of their most grievous charges against our civilisation, and our pretensions to teach them a more excellent way, that we bury our progenitors in cheap deal coffins, and do not so much as offer sacrifice to their manes or provide them with the fare to the next world. No one, of course, ever made the mistake of expecting the T'sung-li-Yamên to co-operate with the propagandists from the West in their endeavours to introduce Christianity. It is doubtful if the central Government could do much, even were it ever so well disposed. The country is too large, the means of communication with the outlying provinces are too slow and primitive to make the thing possible, even granted the good intentions; and the good intentions are notoriously wanting. It required the energetic reprisals of the European Governments for the cruel massacre of Tientsin in 1870 to convince the T'sung-li-Yamên of the advisability of giving something more substantial than a mere promise of protection to foreigners, which was intended to be broken on the first opportunity. In connection with those massacres the Government issued a memorandum defining its attitude towards the missionaries. It professed no hostility to them or to the object which brought them to the country; but it complained,—and the charge was levelled more particularly against the Roman Catholic missionaries, who were specifically named—that the converts were not drawn from a moral class. The result, it affirmed, was that this boasted religion had come to be thought lightly of among the more respectable members of the community. Its unpopularity had been greatly increased by the conduct of the converts, who, “relying upon the influence of the missionaries, oppress and take advantage of the common people [those

who had not accepted Christianity];” and yet more by the conduct of the missionaries themselves, who, when collisions occurred between Christians and the others, invariably upheld the former in their conflict with the authorities. “This indiscriminating enlistment of proselytes,” they went on, “has gone so far that the rebels and criminals of China, pettifoggers and mischief-makers, and such like, take refuge in the profession of Christianity for the purpose of creating disorder. This has deeply dissatisfied the people, and their dissatisfaction, long felt, grows into animosity, and their animosity into deadly hostility. The populations of different localities . . . do not know that there is any distinction between [different religious propagandists among] the nations of the West. They include them all under the one denomination of foreigners, and thus any serious collision that occurs compromises all foreigners in China.” To control the missionaries, and to prevent so far as possible any troubles between them and the populace, the T'sung-li-Yamên submitted eight articles to the following effect: (1) the Yü-Ying Tang, or infant asylums, should be abolished, or failing that, the sphere of their labours should be restricted to the children of native Christians unable to rear them; (2) women should under no circumstances be admitted into the chapels (or establishments), nor should female missionaries be allowed in China; (3) missionaries residing in China should be amenable to Chinese law and usage; (4) where Chinese and foreigners lived together in the same locality, the one law should be impartially administered to both; (5) the passports of the French missionaries, authorising them to proceed to any province to preach and teach, should state distinctly and precisely the province and the prefecture; (6)

before accepting any man as a convert, missionaries should satisfy themselves as to his moral character; (7) missionaries should be forced to obey the established laws (or respect the dignity) of China; (8) the authorities should, "in the interests of peace," be consulted on the question of purchasing land for the erection of chapels, etc., and the missionaries should not have the right to demand the restitution of any chapel they might be pleased to indicate.

There are two or three interesting questions in regard to these proposals. Let it be stated at once that the first, fifth, and eighth did not concern British Protestant missions. It was pointed out at the time to the Chinese authorities by Lord Granville that converts, simply by becoming converts, were not exempted from the obligations of their natural allegiance or from the jurisdiction of the local authorities. This disposed of the assertion that the missionaries upheld their converts in their opposition to the ruling powers. As to the charge that native rogues were attracted to the Christian fold by the prospect of making profit out of their professed conversion, it is to be feared there was something in it, though not so much as the T'sung-li-Yamên tried to make out. This is one of the troubles our missionaries have to encounter wherever they go; but, even if we had not ample proof to the contrary, it would be a monstrous injustice to suppose that the ranks of converts were made up even largely of the criminal classes. We have yet to be persuaded, moreover, that the missionaries do not well to bestow particular attention upon these classes. As for the implication of connivance between the missionaries and the pettifoggers, etc., to defeat the ends of Chinese justice, that also is an assumption altogether

unwarranted. Here and there may possibly be found a teacher with much zeal and little discretion, who deals less delicately than he might with Chinese prejudices; but if there has ever been any interference, and that has still to be proved, it has never gone further than a protest against some glaring wrong or some diabolical cruelty aimed at a native for no other reason than that he was a Christian. Chinese punishments cannot be paralleled in the world for brutality. Much odium, having its origin in the disapproval of the Mandarins and in the sneers and innuendoes of the Taouist priests, attaches to a convert to Christianity; and if he is not under the immediate wing of the missionaries, his lot is pretty sure to be a hard one. But one of the most striking features of missionary work in China is the loyalty and devotion of the bulk of the native converts. If proof be required, it may be found in the minutes of the Consular investigation into the cause of the outbreaks at Wuhu and Wuhsueh in 1891. Missionary reports may possibly be partial, but this official document is not. It proves, beyond doubt, that in the riots at the latter place, when a Wesleyan minister named Argent and an Imperial Customs officer named Green were killed, the natives attached to the various missions performed excellent service in protecting the European ladies and children from the fury of their countrymen.

The second of the proposals put forward by the T'sung-li-Yamên is very curious and significant. It is an offence to Chinese propriety that men and women should associate freely; and the idea of the latter going about the country and penetrating into strange houses is utterly repugnant to them. Personally, though they are undoubtedly of much

value in the conduct of the missions, we are inclined to think that the prevalent impression as to their moral character,—or to put it bluntly their want of moral character—militates very powerfully against their influence for good. Curiously enough, women were the involuntary causes of the massacres at Tientsin and at Wuhsueh in 1891, and of the disturbances at Wuhu in the month (May) preceding the affair at Wuhsueh. It is fair to state here that it was the action of the Sisters of Mercy attached to the French Catholic missions which stirred the popular fury in each instance. Among the many singular superstitions of the Chinese people is one which corresponds closely to the *miaumai* of the Hindoos; a belief that Western physicians use the eyes, brains, and hearts of infants in the concoction of their medicines and of those magical potions which are to be used in the fulness of time to kill off the inhabitants of China preparatory to the confiscation of their land. This absurd belief probably originated from their own practices in this direction. The Chinese, as their law-books show, are firm believers in witchcraft by spells and drugs, and those parts of the human frame which we have mentioned are frequently employed by them in the way of medicines; a practice, by the way, not unknown in our own country even in the eighteenth century. One of the great works of the Sisters was the saving of infant life. Female babies in China are held in very poor estimation, and are frequently thrown out to die or given away to any persons so misguided as to desire the possession of them. The object of the Sisters was in every way commendable. They sought to prevent a deplorable waste of human life; or, if their care could not avail to save the poor little wasted bodies, they sought at least to save

their souls. They gathered into their infant asylums all the children they could find. It was proved that their methods were not always beyond reproach, but the end, they argued, justified any means. The deaths were very numerous, not unnaturally, considering the neglected condition of the children when received. A rumour spread that the Foreign Devils were employing professional kidnappers to obtain infants for the sake of their eyes, hearts, and brains. The educated classes are, in all that pertains to physiological knowledge, as ignorant and as superstitious as the common people. The popular rage broke out; some bodies, which were exhumed, seemed to afford confirmation of the charges; the official classes and the secret societies fanned the flame; and the result was that every French man and woman in Tientsin were killed, and all the property belonging to them and to their mission destroyed. The nuns were subjected to foul outrage after death, and their bodies thrown into the Peiho river. The French were virtually the only sufferers, though some Russian property was damaged and two Russians killed under the impression that they were French; but the prompt action of the foreign representatives at Peking, a little further up the river, frightened the T'sung-li-Yamên, and the riots were quelled.

The old story about Knai-tse, or baby-stealers, was, as we have hinted, at the bottom of the outbreak at Wuhu on May 12th, 1891, and of the outbreak at Wuhsueh on June 5th following. The Koloa-Hui, one of the many secret societies with which China is honeycombed, was an active instigator of the former, and probably also of the latter. A proclamation was posted about the streets of Wuhu after the riot, in which direct reference was made to the allegations of



kidnapping as the sole cause of the disturbances. In regard to the origin of the troubles at Wuhsueh, we will quote the deposition of a native Christian named Hsiung Chialien, servant to Mr. Warren, as taken before Consul Gardner of Hankow.

At about six in the evening of the 5th of June, a Chinaman was seen in Wuhsueh carrying four Chinese female babies. He was asked what he was doing with them. He said he was taking them down to Kiukiang, to the Roman Catholic mission, to be made into medicine. I saw the man and the babies; they were just outside the Wesleyan mission. The people attacked the man. The man said he came from Kwang-chi. When the people attacked the man he escaped to the Lung Ping-sze's official residence, and told the Lung Ping-sze that he was taking the children to the Roman Catholic mission to be educated, they being the children of Catholic parents. There was a mob around Lung Ping's residence. He told the mob that if any of them wanted to make a complaint against the man he must enter his name formally on the charge-sheet. No one would give his name as plaintiff. The Lung Ping-sze thereupon refused to take action, and said the man might take the children to Kiukiang. When the man got outside the mob again attacked him, and one of the children was crushed to death. The children were all under one year old; the dead child was opposite the Wesleyan mission. Some one suggested that the Wesleyan missionaries were going to make medicine of it, and then the Wesleyan mission was attacked. The door of Mrs. Protheroe's house was broken open, and afterwards Mrs. Boden's house was attacked. The mob broke first into the pantry, upset the lamps, which set fire to the place, and then broke into the sitting-room and set that room on fire. They beat the three ladies, and one of the mob seized one of Mrs. Protheroe's children. I got the child away. The ladies and children escaped to the residence of the Makowsoe, who refused them admittance. Afterwards they ran to a vegetable garden, and a poor person allowed them to hide in his hut. Only two (Mrs. Warren and Mrs. Boden) hid in the hut. Mrs. Protheroe and three children got to the Yamên on the Weh Fu. On the way to the Yamên I met Mr. Argent and Mr. Green, and begged them to turn back, as every one had left the

Wesleyan mission, but they would not. When they got near the chapel Mr. Argent tried to take refuge in a shoemaker's shop. The mob destroyed the shop and struck Mr. Argent over the head, and gave him a severe wound. I said to the mob, "Don't strike the foreigner; strike me." The shoemaker asked the mob not to strike Mr. Argent in his shop. The mob then dragged Mr. Argent into the street, and killed him. Meanwhile Mr. Green ran into a pond near. He was in the pond about two hours. The mob said if he would come out they would not beat him. He came out, and they beat him to death with stones.

If there is one class of foreigners which the Chinese populace hates more than another it is the Jesuit missionaries. The Fathers have always been very active, and the nuns, as we have hinted, have not always been careful to consider Chinese susceptibilities or to conceal their abhorrence of the wholesale murders of female infants; they probably never realised that they were seriously credited with collecting children to make medicine of them. But it must not be assumed that the Roman Catholic propagandists are the only ones suspected of these practices. As we have said, the bulk of the Chinese make little or no distinction between any of the Western nations or between different religious sects; to them all are interlopers with but one aim, the confiscation of Chinese lands for their own special benefit. The deposition of Hsiung, which was proved to be in every particular true, shows how quick a mob is to level the epithet baby-stealers against all foreigners indiscriminately. That the latest series of riots had its origin in the usual way seems to be confirmed by the Canton Correspondent of *THE DAILY NEWS*. "A day or two before the work of destruction commenced," he wrote on July 17th, "an anonymous placard was posted on the walls of Cheng-tu

city, warning the people not to let their children go into the streets, as the foreigners were on the hunt for them, desiring to kidnap and kill them that they might obtain an extract from their bodies to manufacture foreign drugs. This was the lighting of the fuse. When the riot was in full career, the Taotai put out this proclamation, using some of the very words of the previous placard: 'We have obtained unquestionable proof that these foreigners do beguile and kidnap small children. But you soldiers and people, don't get too excited. As for us, we will show no mercy to these kidnappers when we get hold of them.'" And a letter from the Rev. William Owen, a member of the London Mission, printed in *THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN* of August 20th, is to the same effect. "In Chen-tu [Cheng-tu], long before the riot, all sorts of rumours about the foreigners were in circulation. Condensed milk was shown round as the brains of Chinese children, prepared for the devilish appetite of the foreigner. Gelatine, of native manufacture and eaten by the people themselves, when found in a mission-building was said to be the essence of Chinese children, who had been boiled down to procure the jelly. Blood-stains were said to be seen on the walls of mission-premises. A Chinese child was reported to have had his tongue cut out by the foreigner." Mr. Owen was at Cheng-tu, so he may be supposed to speak from what he has himself seen and heard. He tells us that the Cheng-tu missionaries, after much trouble, managed to get a small escort of soldiers to Chung-king; and he adds that, up to the time his letter was written, twelve cities and towns, in some of which there were as many as four missionary societies at work, had been visited by the rioters and the missions sacked.

All the evidence seems to point to the fact that the series of riots, beginning at Cheng-tu and ending at Kucheng, in which the Rev. R. W. Stewart and others lost their lives, had their origin in the stories of baby-stealing. The fact that some female missionaries were killed is almost sufficient proof of that.

The close resemblance between the document posted at Cheng-tu and previous proclamations which have heralded previous outbreaks points to a common agency. This agency is that of the secret societies. We know already that the Vegetarian Society, as it is called, instigated the attack at Kucheng. The placard which appeared on the walls of the Wuhu in May, 1891, enumerating charges of kidnapping and recommending the people to rise as one man on a certain day, and completely destroy all the property belonging to both Protestant and Catholic missions on Yihchishan, was the work of the Koloa-Hui, another secret society with identical aims; and after full investigation by Consul Gardner, it seems indubitable that the wretched business at Wuh-sueh was organised by the same society,—that is to say, it suborned the villain who carried the four babies through the streets, and set a native woman to create a disturbance outside the Roman Catholic mission on the pretext that the Sisters had stolen her children. These secret societies are very numerous and powerful bodies with very definite aims, and the Mandarins and other officials are either members of them or are in strong sympathy with their objects. Whatever the ostensible purpose of the societies, one and all have the same ultimate purpose, to foment an insurrection which will lead to the expulsion of the alien dynasty which rules them, and of the hated barbarians from the West who are en-

deavouring to elbow them out of their own country. The apathy of the Mandarins in punishing rioters, and their marked disinclination to afford protection to missionaries, are both referable to their own anti-foreign sympathies and to their fear of the summary vengeance of the secret societies. The Chinese have a mania for plotting on the quiet, and probably it is only their constitutional dislike to strong action that has prevented a general uprising.

The case for missions in China was stated in the newspapers, at the time of the Kucheng riots, by Mr. Eugene Stock, Editorial Secretary of the Church Missionary Society; and no one probably, save those who are entirely inimical to all missionary effort, will deny the cogency of his arguments, or fail to recognise the logic of the position of the Christian Churches in fulfilling the injunction of their Master. One need not describe this attitude in detail, because it is sufficiently well understood both by those who sympathise with it and those who dislike it. Two points, however, are worth particular attention. Ought women to be sent to China? and are the missionaries sufficiently careful not to inflame the passions of the people needlessly? Little can be added to what we have already said about female missionaries; but we must reiterate our conviction, which will be shared by nearly all laymen who have visited China, that the hostile feelings they indisputably excite almost completely nullify the good they would be capable of accomplishing under more favourable conditions. Their enthusiasm and devotion, their bravery and (as a general thing) their tact, their tireless and unceasing

labours in lonely provinces where everything but their own steadfast belief in their cause tells against them, make their relative failure all the more pathetic. Still, badly as Chinese men think of the Western woman who goes about among them unrestrained, the Chinese women are more amenable to feminine influences, when once their natural prejudice has been removed, and there is a marvellously wide field here for female energy. It is possible that our women do more good among their own sex in China than we are generally disposed to admit; but it is certain their presence is an abomination to the people at large, and until China has properly awakened, sporadic outbreaks with more or less serious results are inevitable. The other question, as to the discretion of the missionaries of both sexes, has occupied the attention of successive ministers to Peking and of consuls at the various Treaty ports any time during the past thirty years or more. After all, it must be remembered that China belongs to the Chinese, and that we, when we penetrate beyond the Treaty ports, are only received on sufferance. The authorities do not want us there, and they would turn us out if they could and if they dared. Given a rooted antipathy to foreigners and a missionary whose zeal outruns his discretion, and a disturbance is the most natural result in the world. It speaks well for the qualities of the men we send out to preach the Gospel in China that collisions with the officials and the people have, in circumstances tending very readily to enmity, been so relatively few and the converts so relatively numerous.



## PROSPER MÉRIMÉE.

PROSPER MÉRIMÉE's heart was a posthumous discovery, first revealed to the world by the publication of the famous *LETTRES À UNE INCONNUE*; since then, as is usual with such discoveries, the tendency has been rather to exaggerate the extent of a possession which its owner so successfully concealed. Still, in this day of psychological studies few will quarrel with Mérimée's latest biographer for devoting himself quite as much to the character as to the writings of this interesting and complex person.<sup>1</sup> Altogether M. Filon's book is the best and fullest work on Mérimée that has yet appeared. M. Taine's introduction to the *LETTRES À UNE INCONNUE*, M. Blaze de Bury's preface to the *LETTRES À UNE AUTRE INCONNUE*, the Comte d'Haussonville's biography, and the rest,—all are resumed, corrected, or amplified in these judicious pages. It would be impertinent to enumerate M. Filon's qualifications, but he has the great advantage of being sympathetic, as an Imperialist and faithful to the old order; and also of having had access to information and documents unavailable before, chief among which is Mérimée's correspondence with the Comtesse de Montijo, mother of the Empress Eugénie, with whom he maintained a life-long friendship. And yet, with all the wealth of his material and the abundance of his knowledge, M. Filon does not seek to dogmatise, but discreetly leaves the reader to form his own conclusions.

The first question that appears to

<sup>1</sup> MÉRIMÉE ET SES AMIS; by Augustin Filon. ; Paris, 1894.

exercise every student of Mérimée is his cynicism, that habitual doubt and distrust which to his contemporaries illustrated perfectly the motto engraven on his ring, *μέμνησ' ἀπιστεῖν*. Whence did this cynicism come? Was it due to the early influence of Beyle? Was it largely inherited, especially on the mother's side, as one authority suggests? Was it connected with that episode of boyhood narrated by M. Taine, the scolded child leaving the room in tears, and, as the door closed behind him, hearing the laughter of his elders, amused that he should have thought they were really angry with him? Whatever the origin may have been, the fact itself is important, since (as we believe) this cynicism, whether or not assumed at first merely as a cloak of shyness, gradually so folded itself round Mérimée as to become an inseparable part of him, and to form in fact the one obvious and constant trait of his character. He has had some prototypes, notably among Frenchmen of the eighteenth century; but in our own day so perfect a cynic would be an anachronism.

The first exhibition of this temperament, and of the talent which went with it, was rather an elaborate practical joke; one of those mystifications which are now almost out of fashion, but which were much in vogue about 1825, when literature, other than classic, was pervaded by a spirit of fun quite alien to the present seriousness of young authors. Undignified as such a trick may be deemed, it has to be confessed that Mérimée's first published work, *LE THÉÂTRE DE CLARA GAZUL* (professing to be the

plays written for herself by a celebrated Spanish actress), was a gross imposture, aggravated by the portrait of Clara which formed the frontispiece, and in which none except the chosen few could detect the features of Prosper Mérimée. The identity of Clara Gazul was of course eagerly sought for; the editor had taken good care to make the search a difficult one; yet even so one Spanish patriot was found bold enough to allow that the translation was fairly good, but nothing to the original. The plays themselves are a selection from a number of similar efforts read privately to a circle of friends, at the time when a spirit of revolt against the canons of the classic drama was already in the air.<sup>1</sup> They are witty and readable, but not acting plays, any more than are the PROVERBES of Alfred de Musset. The chief of them (such as LE CIEL ET L'ENFER, UNE FEMME EST UN DIABLE, L'OCCASION) have common features. The scene in each is laid in some Spanish colony: the characters of a lady (or two), a lover, and a confessor figure in each; and in all of them the author discloses thus early his singular animosity against Catholicism and its ministers. LE CARROSSE DU SAINT-SACREMENT (now included in this collection, though of somewhat later date) breathes the same unedifying spirit, and contains also the first specimen of that peculiar type of woman, the *femme méchante*,

malicious, mischief-loving, and adorable, who, in life and in literature, fascinated Mérimée so much. It is the story of the actress who playfully atones to the Church for her irregularities by presenting her coach to be used henceforth for conveying the last consolations of religion to the dying. The subject might be treated without offence; but Mérimée gives a malignant twist to the Peruvian legend by representing as the freak of a capricious woman what in the original version was a deed of sincere penitence. LE CARROSSE is the only dramatic work of Mérimée that was put to the test of performance. Years later, when its author was a famous Academician, Mdle. Augustine Brohan of the Comédie Française, thinking to find a suitable part for herself in the wayward actress of LE CARROSSE, prevailed upon the directors of the Théâtre Française, and upon Mérimée with much reluctance and despite his own judgment, to have the piece produced. This was in 1850; and nothing can be said of it except that Mdle. Brohan's dresses were much admired. After a few nights the play was dropped. Mérimée never professed to be a dramatist, or cared to be; though that he might have gone far in this direction seems evident, both otherwise and from the fact that so accomplished a playwright as Émile Augier pressed him on one occasion urgently, but vainly, for his collaboration.

To return, however, to the early years. The success of this first imposture suggested another. From Gazul to Guzla was only a slight transposition; and LA GUZLA, a collection of Illyrian songs by one Ivan Maglanovitch was an even more remarkable mystification than CLARA GAZUL, involving as it did not only a biography of the supposed poet, with notes, appendices and so forth, but also a set of ideas and

<sup>1</sup> One of Mérimée's early and unpublished dramas was entitled CROMWELL, about which one of the audience records that "the scene changed a thousand times and the action was multiplied by indefinite complications." Now, if there are still any persons curious about the origin of the Romantic movement, it may be noted that this CROMWELL preceded the famous CROMWELL by at least three years, though it should be added of course that, except in a contempt for the hapless Unities, Mérimée had not the least affinity with the Romantic spirit as it soon came to be understood and personified in Victor Hugo.

sentiments wholly foreign to the French nature. *LA GUZLA* was taken seriously by many eminent persons, among others by the Russian poet Pouchkine, who translated into his own language some of these "specimens of Illyrian genius"; and the great Goethe was so far impressed that he prided himself (in a letter to Mérimée) upon having penetrated the author's identity. We can fancy how that author must have chuckled at all this stir. His purpose, he tells us, had been to travel in Illyria for the sake of local colour before concocting this book, but the necessary funds were wanting. "Never mind," he writes to the friend who was to have accompanied him; "let us describe our tour, and then with the proceeds of the sale we will go and see whether the country resembles our description." The result was *LA GUZLA*. "From that time forward," he adds, "I was disgusted with 'local colour,' having seen how easily it could be manufactured"; a flippant remark obviously aimed at Hugo and his school. Neither *CLARA GAZUL* nor *LA GUZLA* produced any pecuniary profit; but such versatility and power in a young man who was not yet twenty-five could not fail to make Mérimée known. And so he betook himself to more genuine work. On *LA JACQUERIE*, a series of scenes in dialogue describing the peasants' revolt of the fourteenth century, an amount of time and labour was bestowed out of all proportion to the cold reception the book met with; a reception which no reader, who has tried to wade through this curious mixture of narrative and drama, will much wonder at. *LA CHRONIQUE DE CHARLES IX.* on the other hand, which Mérimée calls a worthless novel, became popular at once, and remains, with its striking incidents and strong characters, a solitary specimen of what its

author might have accomplished in the field of historical romance.<sup>1</sup>

But Mérimée's ambition, and at twenty-seven it may be supposed he still had some, pointed rather to the Academy than to the favour of the multitude for which, now and always, he had a very hearty contempt. Having shown that he could write a novel, he contented himself henceforth in fiction with short stories, while in graver matters he took up, as the fancy seized him, history, archæology, travel, and the study of languages. The twenty years beginning with 1830 were the busiest of his life. In literature alone he touched and adorned almost every department; he was at the same time a Government official, went much into society, and led something of a gay life generally. It was in 1830 that he first visited Spain, and at Madrid made the acquaintance of the Comtesse de Montijo, as also of the two little girls, one of whom was destined to rise so high. This visit happened to coincide with the Revolution of July; and Mérimée laments that his absence from Paris caused him to miss "so fine a spectacle," a word, by the way, which indicates pretty well his part in life generally, that of a spectator, interested at first but yawning more and more as the play goes on.

This particular spectacle, however, influenced Mérimée's career considerably. Under the new reign he began official life, first as private secretary to the Minister of the Interior, and a few years later as Inspector-General of Historic Monuments. In this position, which he held for twenty years, it was his lot to travel from one end of France to the other, to draw up many reports, and to come in contact with every variety of provincialism.

<sup>1</sup> *LA CHRONIQUE DU RÈGNE DE CHARLES IX.* has been recently translated into English by Mr. Saintsbury.

Naturally much of his literary work is connected, directly or indirectly, with his professional capacity. Some of this,—such as *ÉTUDES SUR LES ARTS AU MOYEN AGE*, *ÉTUDES SUR LES BEAUX-ARTS*, *NOTES D'UN VOYAGE DANS LE MIDI*, &c., is for the general reader ; the greater part is of a technical nature and would demand an expert for its appreciation. It is commonly admitted that Mérimée, in spite of his inability to grasp the religious spirit of Gothic architecture, was a good Inspector of Monuments, that he elucidated many points of archæology, and that he saved many a venerable building from unwise restoration. Tact and temper, as we know without going to France, are often required to avert the reckless use of whitewash by well-meaning local authorities. Mérimée had plenty of tact, and plenty of opportunity for its exercise, especially in dealing with his enemies the priests, of whom, in his examination of churches, he had to see a good deal. Whatever he felt on such occasions, he managed to repress his feelings ; although in his whole career he found only one priest to speak well of, and that was the curé who, objecting to some repairs which the Corporation wanted to enforce, closed his church and suspended all services until he had gained his point. This was a man after Mérimée's own heart.

But we cannot linger over the official Mérimée, nor yet over Mérimée the historian, another of his numerous activities. The critical faculty, learning, and a terse lucid style (the best French prose that can be found, as some good judges affirm), these go far to the making of a historian ; but in the faith which is needed for generalising particulars, Mérimée, as Taine said, was quite deficient. Too sceptical to trust any theory, he avoided all and confined himself

rigidly to the exposition of facts. *LA GUERRE SOCIALE* and *LA CONJURATION DE CATALINA* suggested this criticism to M. Taine, but it is applicable even to such comparatively popular works as the *PORTRAITS HISTORIQUES ET LITTÉRAIRES* and the *HISTOIRE DE DON PÈDRE DE CASTILLE*. It should be observed, however, that M. de Loménie, Mérimée's successor in the Academy, put forward another and more flattering explanation of Mérimée's dryness as a historian. Since he possessed, says M. de Loménie, in the highest degree the inventive faculty, he was so afraid of this intruding upon the sobriety of history that, to guard against the danger, he purposely constrained himself to the opposite extreme. This engaging theory, so full of consolation for unread authors, sounds at first like one of those bits of extravagance which we expect to find in Academic eulogies ; yet there may be something in it to account for the contrast between Mérimée's caution in history, and his freedom in fiction or semi-fictional subjects. A morsel, for example, like *LA PRISE DE LA REDOUTE* (which no doubt is pure fact) is sufficient to show how well he could combine vividness and brevity, when not trammelled by a consciousness of the dignity of history.

But Mérimée was perverse enough to write history for his own pleasure, and it pleased him generally to follow rare and remote bye-paths. The Social War is a page in Roman annals on the details of which, at any rate before Mommsen, even students might without blushing have owned themselves deplorably ignorant. Yet *LA GUERRE SOCIALE*, which appeared in 1841, did as much as anything to pave the way for Mérimée's election to the Academy in 1844.

In conferring this honour the Academicians had collectively pardoned,

as doubtless they had individually admired, many trivial productions of the same pen during the last ten years,—the greater part, in fact, of those admirable tales which will ensure their author a lasting fame among all lovers of literature—*TAMANGO*, *LE VASE ETRUSQUE*, *LA PARTIE DE TRICTRAC*, *LA DOUBLE MÉPRISE*, *LA VENUS D'ILLE*, *COLOMBA*, *ARSÈNE GUILLOT*. It so happened that the last-named of these was published on the morrow of Mérimée's election, and great was the scandal among many of his new colleagues that the man, whom they had taken to themselves as a grave and erudite historian, should appear as a realistic novelist, dealing with such a subject as the love of a common courtesan. The treatment of this subject in fiction, though it had the precedent of *MANON LESCAUT*, was not in those days so usual as it has since become; moreover it was an unexpected development on Mérimée's part, for *ARSÈNE GUILLOT* is unique among his tales, as the only one which deals with what it is now the fashion to call a problem of actual life. He does not indeed handle it in the fashionable method which, happily for fiction, had not then been invented; *ARSÈNE GUILLOT* is simply the story, pathetic by the absence of all attempt at pathos, of an unfortunate woman whose love was her whole existence. And in recalling the mass of literature that has since been devoted to this matter, we feel inclined to subscribe heartily to M. Taine's remark: "The wax-taper offered by Arsène Guillot is a summary of many volumes on the religion of the people and the true feelings of courtesans."

It is this faculty of summarising, of impressing character and situation by a few words or sentences, that makes Mérimée so perfect a master of fiction. If we add to the stories already named *CARMEN* (1845), *L'ABBÉ AU-*

*BAIN* (1846), and two of much later date, *LA CHAMBRE BLEUE* and *LOKIS*, the list will be tolerably complete. Of these *COLOMBA* best illustrates Mérimée's manner of interweaving in his fiction, without the least pedantry, a large amount of information. Besides being an exciting story, it is incidentally "a philosophic study of primitive man as seen in the institution of the *vendetta*." Though contained in no more than one hundred and fifty pages, it is a full novel; how full may easily be tested by any one who will analyse it, and then do the same by, say, one of M. Zola's novels six times as long; he will find that the latter is more easily compressible than the former. Yet with all due deference to the much-lauded *COLOMBA*, we may confess to a conviction that Mérimée's stories, as compared with one another, are better and more typical of his genius in proportion to their brevity. On this ground *CARMEN* may be preferred to *COLOMBA*, and *LA VÉNUS D'ILLE* to *CARMEN*. The central idea of each of these three is the same, the *femme méchante*, *Colomba* the beautiful savage, *Carmen* the baneful gipsy, and the statue with its "tigress-like expression," its "suggestion of indescribable malice." M. Filon observes that Mérimée's taste in men was for brigands, and in women for gipsies. This remark, applied to his stories, may explain why they mostly turn on the strange, the fantastic, the abnormal. Throughout there is a vein of mockery, as though the author were laughing partly at himself, partly at his reader. Could anything be more gruesome than the accident which is the foundation of *LOKIS*, a story only saved from repulsiveness by its vagueness and improbability? What more tantalising, and even ridiculous, than the abrupt termination of *LA PARTIE DE TRICTRAC*, in the anticlimax produced



by the sudden appearance of a whale which interrupts the captain's yarn at its most critical part? Or what more fantastic than the idea of the dark fluid which trickles into *LA CHAMBRE BLEUE* to the terror of the occupants who think it blood and find it to be port-wine? So the story ends in a laugh, but not without suggesting a possible and horrible inversion of the incident.

Idle subjects most of these, and none (except *ARSÈNE GUILLOT*) coming close to the realities of life; such might be a verdict according with the modern tendency of fiction. Yet in one sense Mérimée may be claimed by the Realists, for no writer has more bluntly despised every form of euphemism; frankness is one of the virtues of cynicism. It is a more undoubted and peculiar distinction that each one of his stories is an almost flawless piece of workmanship, the like of which can hardly be found. Preference must be a matter of individual taste; but in the way of constructive skill, there can be little doubt that *LA VENUS D'ILLE* is his masterpiece, the ideal type of all that class of fiction whose object is to produce artificial fear with the least obvious use of artifice. However often read, each fresh perusal will reveal some subtle details which help towards the general effect. Passing through the phases of curiosity, interest, excitement, the reader is left at the end in that kind of uneasy conjecture which makes the ordinary person instinctively look over his shoulder, half expecting to see something. The basis of the story, M. Filon has discovered, was a Latin legend in some medieval chronicle; the composition and treatment were of course Mérimée's own. And certainly no ghosts, phantoms, or vampires, —not all the machinery of the supernatural so beloved by the Roman-

ticists,—not even the most thrilling narratives of Edgar Poe—appear to us so effectual on the reader's mind. The whole art of the thing, as Mérimée himself sardonically pointed out, lies in the gently graduated transition from the ordinary to the extraordinary, from the commonplace to the abnormal. The principles which should govern the use of the preternatural in fiction he indicates in a matter-of-fact way, suggestive, as M. Filon says, of a recipe from a cookery-book. "Take a few clearly-defined characters, quaint but possible; give the most minute reality to their features; then from the queer to the marvellous the transition can be made so slight that the reader finds himself in the region of pure fantasy, before he is aware that the real world is far behind him."

The attraction exercised on Mérimée's fiction by the "adorable and malicious woman" has already been referred to; the influence of this same personality on his life is bound to interest all those who associate him chiefly with the romance of the Incognita. How many a great lady would fain have let it be believed that she was the Unknown, it would be perilous to guess. But *Mdlle. Jenny Dacquin* (for the identity may be taken as established) was neither a Parisian fine lady nor an English peeress; she was the daughter of a Boulogne lawyer. The acquaintance began in an orthodox literary way out of some remarks addressed to Mérimée about his *CHRONIQUE DE CHARLES IX.*, and his replies thereto; but who the writer was, beyond the fact that she was a woman of culture, remained a mystery to Mérimée until they met in 1840. Then, whatever ideals he might previously have formed of his Fair Unknown, he was quite captivated by the original; and from that time

forward the letters tell their own tale, down to the last short note written two hours before his death. This thirty years' correspondence,—a Thirty Years' War it might be called, waged with the most delicate weapons that lovers use, with pique and persiflage, irony and sentiment—might be the theme of endless dissertations. What was Mérimée's idea of woman in the abstract? Did he love this lady? What were her feelings towards him? Why did they not marry? Here are questions for the curious. Compendiously, however, something like a true theory may be presented thus. The pupil of Beyle, when he first entered Parisian life, had presumably imbibed in more or less degree the rather brutal views of that ferocious extrooper on the subject of woman. What these were may be ascertained by any one who will read the study of Beyle in *PORTRAITS HISTORIQUES ET LITTÉRAIRES*; briefly they amount to a coarser expression of Pope's well-known calumny. But this phase could not be lasting. Mérimée had far more refinement than Beyle, besides a cold and prudent temperament which probably prevented him from ever plunging into excess of dissipation. To the attraction of the courtesan and the ballet-girl succeeded the opposite extreme, that of the literary woman. This phase coincides with the first blush of Mérimée's literary fame, and his entry into literary society. How long it lasted we know not; but it seems to have ended ludicrously (according to tradition) in a short and stormy affair with George Sand, broken off by mutual antipathy after twenty-four hours. The distinguished lady found Mérimée cold and supercilious; he on his part vowed that he would have no more of the woman of genius. There remained the ordinary woman of

society, fashionable, well-dressed, and well-looking, but not intellectual enough for so fastidious a taste. And thus by selection Mérimée evolved his ideal of a woman; a woman who should be critical and appreciative of literature, but no blue-stocking; frivolous and yet sentimental, fashionable and yet not insipid, caressing but somewhat spiteful, loyal and at the same time capable both of inspiring and of feeling jealousy. Such a combination of sense and sensibility would charm and hold him, and such a woman he found in the Unknown.

That he did not marry her might be ascribed simply to his often-expressed dislike for the responsibilities of married life; but the lady herself, whose decision of will is obvious, may possibly have had something to say on this point, just as she certainly deserves all the credit of having regulated their relations and set bounds for her lover which he should not pass. However it fell out so, posterity at least need not complain of the chance which saved so elegant a flirtation from an untimely end in dulness and domesticity.

In all such speculations it would be easy to over-estimate Mérimée's capacity for love, and to misunderstand his views of the other sex. For, after all, who can securely affirm from these Letters any depth of heart, as distinct from that sentimentality which is the occasional relapse of cynicism? Among animals, be it observed, Mérimée was most fond of cats. This fancy, shared by divers eminent men, is generally, we take it, attributable to the fact that cats purr; with Mérimée it was due quite as much to the fact that they scratch. So also it was the feline woman, or, if the phrase be objectionable, the feline element in woman that attracted him most. Comparing

the two sexes, he much preferred the society of woman, finding her more interesting and less disagreeable than man; but in woman as the helper and equal of man he had no belief; of her superiority, so old-fashioned was he, not the faintest idea had ever crossed his mind.

And now, amid his successes in society, in literature, and in love, Mérimée had reached middle-age when the events of 1848 afforded him the spectacle which he had missed eighteen years before. His comments thereon are contained chiefly in a letter to the Comtesse de Montijo, in which, after sketching with Taciteian terseness and pungency the familiar events of the Revolution, he concludes: "It was carried out by less than six hundred men, more than half of whom did not know what they were doing, or what they wanted. Now all is over." He is contemptuous of the King's stupidity and faintness of heart: "What in Heaven's name is the use of history, when no one benefits by it?" On his fellow-citizens, the French people, he is still more severe. Referring to the confusion and uncertainty which followed Louis Philippe's abdication, he writes: "The long and short of it is that cowardice and nothing else is at the root of the French character. No one dares; and combining vanity with cowardice, we adorn our fear with the names of 'spirit' and 'enthusiasm.' . . . . Another great vice of our age is jealousy, and hatred of all superiority. To such an extent does this prevail that the sight of our neighbour's misfortunes amply consoles us for our own. The people forgets its own abject poverty while it gloats over the discomfiture of the rich; and the day when a Rothschild fails will be a day of rejoicing for every peddling little tradesman who will thereby be ruined himself the

next day. . . . Will it ever be possible to make anything of a people always ready to kill and get killed for the sake of a senseless phrase?"

The remarkable thing about these frank criticisms is that they should have been written by a Frenchman of Frenchmen. Yet, critical as he was, Mérimée cannot be credited with much political foresight. Like others he had at first a poor opinion of the coming man; indeed he went so far as confidently to predict that, whoever became President of the Republic, it would not be Louis Napoleon; and afterwards he refers to him patronisingly as "our poor President." Altogether the outlook of public affairs at this time inclined him to despair of the State; his private position also was altered for the worse. Unfortunately he took the wrong side in the once notorious case of Libri. He maintained, in spite of a judicial decision to the contrary, that this gentleman was innocent of purloining valuable books and manuscripts from the public libraries of France; and his obstinate loyalty to Libri, whom he had known, led him into expressing such strong opinions on the motives and management of the prosecution that he had to undergo, for contempt of court, a short term of imprisonment. Released after a fortnight's confinement, he offered to resign his Inspectorship, but the offer was not accepted. He seems to have thought seriously of leaving France, where he compares himself to the man who started for India with a cargo of skates; "only in my case I have not travelled, but the climate here has changed, which comes to the same thing."

Things were at the worst when a sudden turn of fortune brought Mérimée once more to the front. This was the romantic marriage of the Emperor with Mdlle. Eugénie



de Montijo. The little girl whom, at Madrid and during her residence in Paris, Mérimée had amused with stories and spoiled with sweetmeats, was now Her Majesty the Empress of the French. The old friend was not forgotten. He might have aspired to high office, but he was content with the dignity and emoluments of a Senator, and he resigned his Inspectorship. At the Tuileries, at Fontainebleau, and at Compiègne he was a favoured guest, and his cultured cynicism entertained all who did not happen to be its victims. The grateful remembrance of the Empress was met by a corresponding devotion on Mérimée's side. He is never weary of extolling her dignity and courage; indeed, in his capacity as a privileged grumbler he sometimes remonstrated with her for incurring what he considered needless danger. Thus it is with some reprobation that he quotes her brave words to the people who rushed to protect her, as she left the opera-house after the explosion of January, 1858: "Pray do not concern yourselves about us; this is one of our functions."

Mérimée was no fawning courtier, but frank and independent in his relations alike to the Empress and the Emperor. The latter he long distrusted, as a mere gambler for high stakes; but gradually he recognised in him the quality of inflexibility, the possession of a will, and the power to conceal it. He praised the Emperor's speeches, and even fancied a resemblance between his character and that of Julius Cæsar, insomuch that, instead of himself writing a life of the great Roman (as he had intended), he placed his learning at the service of Napoleon, and received, or gave, the honour of collaboration in the *VIE DE CÉSAR*.

But by a perverse fate Mérimée was never destined to be in touch with his

surroundings. No sooner did the Empire manifest liberal tendencies than he scented danger and grew uneasy. He was more imperialist than the Emperor, not because of any sentiment about the Napoleonic legend, but from a belief in the virtues of the Napoleonic system. His experience under Louis Philippe had not enamoured him of popular rights. Parliamentary rule he calls organised anarchy, and little better than revolution; nor could he understand why the Emperor should incline to be a constitutional monarch when he might be an autocrat. "Such experiments," he ironically said, "are as though Harlequin should give his children a drum and trumpet and say to them, 'Amuse yourselves, but make no noise.'" So strongly did he feel on this subject that he wrote to the Empress urging her to dissuade Napoleon from giving the right of interpellation to the Chamber. The sincerity of his intentions was undoubted, and was rewarded on this occasion by a decoration which he tried to decline with the characteristic remark, "It will make no difference in my loyalty, and it may inspire loyalty in others." On the Italian question he was among those who advocated the policy of Thorough. "Shut up Pius the Ninth and Garibaldi [he said] together on a desert island, and let us hope they will devour each other like the famous Kilkenny cats." Clericalism was of course another of his antipathies. Here he was not even faithful to his Napoleonic system, for with curious inconsistency he detested equally the Church and the Revolution. His attitude towards religion cannot be passed over, for it gives reason to those who hold that there must be a twist somewhere in the best-regulated mind. Priests and the apparatus of Catholicism he hated as bitterly as Voltaire, and with less cause; with

more bitterness than Bentham he seems to have considered himself the personal enemy of Providence ; even that vague and harmless thing called the religious sentiment he could not abide. Irreligion was in fact his foible, a constitutional antipathy, apparently unreasoned and certainly not proceeding from any devotion to positive knowledge or any ardour for science. Pure scepticism like this, if confined to personal opinions, concerns no one else ; but Mérimée appears on this subject alone to have departed, at least occasionally, from that well-bred tolerance and indifference which generally marked his behaviour as a perfect gentleman and man of the world. Irritated perhaps by the many attempts to convert him with which he was pestered, he sometimes indulged in the pleasure of shocking his hearers by boasting, beyond the limits of good taste, about his unregenerate condition. If so, it is truly remarkable that a man of Mérimée's acuteness and sense of proportion should have failed to see that people who think much of their souls' safety are at least not more ridiculous than those who attach a preposterous importance to their own damnation.

Men of this temperament are not likely to be happy, and Mérimée's pessimism deepened as time went on. If he played a certain part in public life, it was rather by force of circumstances than of his own choice. As a Senator he rarely spoke ; as an Academician he served as a kind of mediator between the Court and the majority of the Academy who were hostile to Napoleon. His footing in the Imperial household made him the man behind the scenes to whom things are not so brilliant as they appear from the front. Even in 1860 he evinces uneasiness as to the fate of the Empire. Besides deeming Liberalism a mistaken policy, he had little trust

in Napoleon's ministers, and he could not but think that his master was ill-served when, for example, on returning from a Cabinet Council, the Duc de Morny, in order to avoid the proximity of his dear colleague, M. Walerewski, climbed to the box and sat beside the coachman. "If you kept a pack of hounds," he writes, "would you care to have the dogs fighting with each other instead of following the game?"

In these circumstances he found it a relief to be frequently absent from the atmosphere of the Court. Troubled with a lung-complaint he began regularly to spend the winter months at Cannes ; at other times he travelled about, England and Scotland being favourite resorts. In both countries he had many acquaintances, and to London he was especially attracted by the British Museum and his friendship with Panizzi. Wherever he went he was something of a lion, and his intimacy with Napoleon seemed to invest him with a kind of informal diplomatic status. His comments on British habits (better informed than the usual run of such), his opinions on various eminent persons, Lord Brougham, Lord John Russell, Cobden, and that wonderful "old Pam," are plentiful in the letters to Mdlle. Dacquin and in those to Panizzi. It is in a letter to the Comtesse de Montijo of January, 1862, that he mentions for the first time "a certain commentator on Homer, called Gladstone, whose ability in framing budgets is already the subject of wonder, and whose hour is approaching." A later reference to the same statesman is, or is meant to be, less complimentary : "He is a curious combination of the child, the statesman, and the madman (*Il y a en lui de l'enfant, de l'homme d'état, et du fou*)." He was an interested visitor at the House of Commons, where the

general style of oratory impressed him with the quaint idea that, "The members all speak a peculiar language perfectly untrue and without any relation to facts, but as they all use the same style, they all understand each other, and so no harm is done."

Thus abroad Mérimée appears a shrewd and not disagreeable critic. Far less pleasant is the picture of him at home in his declining years. With growing feebleness and the habits of an invalid, his moroseness and discontent increased. The times were out of joint; nothing in France satisfied him. Fretfully he complains that at the Tuileries there was too much eating and drinking, that there were too many Germans about, no literary tone, and, strange to relate, that it was impossible to obtain any news of what was going on. Literature still afforded him some amusement. He was an accomplished linguist, and he devoted himself especially to Russian, in the introduction of which literature he may be called the pioneer. He translated and wrote articles upon authors like Tourgénéff, Pouchkine, Nicholas Gogol, not to speak of his recondite excursion into *LES COSAQUES D'AUTREFOIS*. In a letter to his friend Albert Stappfer he explains his partiality for the Russian by a comparison unfavourable to the German language: "In a German sentence you may understand all the *words* without having a notion what the author means. My friend Möhl, himself a native of Wurtemberg, apologised to me the other day for being unable to translate for me a sentence from a German author, 'because [said he] this sentence occurs in the preface, and to understand its meaning, I should have to read through the whole twelve volumes!' This sort of thing does not happen in Russian."

Nothing, however, better illustrates the morbid stage which Mérimée's

pessimism had now reached than his feelings towards the French writers of his own day. From most of these he was of course separated on political grounds; yet even so the appreciation of literature natural to a man of literary taste would, one might have supposed, have had some influence on his judgments. Yet rarely does he go beyond the faintest praise, and generally he speaks with flat contempt. Taine and Edmund About he certainly admired; Renan he praised for his picturesqueness, but laughed at for his timorous half-hearted attack on Christianity. The author of *MADAME BOVARY* he abhorred, and when *SALAMMBO* appeared, he confessed that he skimmed it through to pass the time in an out-of-the-way place where he could get nothing else to read, "but had there been a cookery-book at hand, I should never have opened that volume." Baudelaire was another horror to him; but his pet aversion was Victor Hugo, a man "who is intoxicated with his own words," the author of *LES MISÉRABLES*, "a book that might be dangerous if it were less absurd and less long; it is inferior at all points to the works of Eugène Sue. . . . Has Victor Hugo always been mad, or has he become so lately?"—and so forth. There is no need to multiply these grudging remarks. We may admit the justice of criticisms which attack obviously weak points, such as, in Victor Hugo's case, the constant straining for effect (*l'emphase*): we may recognise the value of such criticism as a corrective of absurd and extravagant praise; but none the less, the general tone of Mérimée in this and other instances reveals a crookedness of vision which, ignoring the virtues of others, saw only their failings and those as through a magnifying-glass. With the true spirit of the pessimist, Mérimée, finding nothing good in contemporary literature,

sought refuge in his old favourites, in Aristophanes, Cervantes, Rabelais, Shakespeare.

It was in 1865 that Mérimée first saw Bismarck at Biarritz; and from this time forward it is easy to read, under the half-mocking "If M. Bismarck allows us" which occurs so frequently in his correspondence, his real conviction that the destinies of Europe had passed from Napoleon's into a stronger hand. When the crisis came and war was imminent, he was at least free from any delusion as to the skill of the French generals or the efficiency of the French army, though at the same time he was quite ignorant of the enemy's strength, considering the Prussians to be a mere rough beer-drinking militia. The disasters which followed broke through his apathy, and called forth all his loyalty to the Empress, together with a patriotism he had long affected to deny. Strange that almost the last act in the life of this confirmed cynic should have been a desperate mission to Thiers (with whom he had never been on very friendly terms) the object of which was to beg that statesman to form a Government and save the dynasty. But Thiers, whether or not he already knew the event of Sedan (for there is a dispute as to dates), politely and firmly declined, professing himself powerless to help the Empress; and so poor Mérimée, sick in body and mind, dragged himself back to Cannes, and died, at the moment when that order of things, to which all his interests were attached, itself vanished away.

He was a remarkable man, but hardly an amiable one. Considered in literature alone, his combination

of vast learning with the lightest and most graceful art of fiction gives him an exceptional place; while his habit of writing just what he liked to write, without regard to money or to popularity, makes him an ideal of literary independence. But circumstances set Mérimée on a more spacious stage than falls to the lot of most men of letters. He was an amateur of many parts; and if to his credit it must be put down that he was full of the Gallic spirit without the common Gallic failings of boastfulness, ostentation, and vanity, that he was above corruption and uninfluenced by fear or favour, that he was loyal to persons and to such principles as he allowed himself to hold; it is on the other hand impossible to deny the futility of a character which was solely critical and destructive, the character of a man whose chief object is to avoid doing what is absurd, and who therefore ends in doing nothing. The purely negative view of life, "a falling through the air [to employ his own illustration] which is pleasant enough until you reach the bottom," can produce no great results. Indeed Mérimée's famous criticism about "the child, the statesman, and the madman" inevitably makes us think that had he himself possessed a little of the child he would have been happier, a little of the madman he would have been more effectual. As it is, we leave his life with a feeling of regret that so much talent and so many opportunities were marred by so fatal a dilettantism. Always, as it seems, within reach of supreme excellence, he halts and says to himself, "Is it worth while?" And the answer unfortunately is always, "No."

THE SWIMMERS.<sup>1</sup>

"MIRIAM, Miriam, what is it? Canst thou not tell a body, bound to a millstone as I? Thy tongue goes fast enough when I wish thee silent!" It was a woman's voice that was beginning to lose its fulness and sweetness, in other words its womanliness, which called up from the courtyard, where the hum of the quern grinding the yellow Indian corn deadened all other sounds.

"It is naught, mother! Only Hussan and Husayn once more." It was a woman's voice also from the roof where the Indian corn was drying to a richer gold in the sunlight; but it was a voice which had hardly come as yet to its full roundness, in other words to its perfect womanliness.

"Hussan and Husayn! What makes them be for ever fighting like young cocks?"

There was an instant's pause; then the voice from the roof came piously, "God knows!"

Miriam herself might have been less modest as to her knowledge. For the case stood thus. It was a corner house between two sequestered alleys which intersected each other at right angles, and there had been a lingering lover, expectant of some recognition, in each alley. Now, if half-a-handful of golden corn be thrown as a guerdon over the parapet just at the angle, and if the lovers, hot-blooded young sparks, spring forward incontinently to pick up the precious grains and meet, then——!

"Indeed, mother, they were very like cocks," remarked Miriam gravely,

as she stepped daintily down the narrow mud-stairs again to resume her spinning in the courtyard. So the whirr of the wheel joined the hum of the quern, and both formed a background to her sudden girlish laugh at the recollection of what she had seen through that peephole in the parapet.

The whole thing was a play to this Osmanzai girl, who, for all her seclusion, knew perfectly well that she was the beauty of the village, and that many another spark besides Hussan and Husayn would be only too glad of half a handful of Indian corn to pick up out of the gutter. But these two being the most expert swimmers in that quaint bare colony of huts set on a loose shale slope with the wild wicked rush of the Indus at its foot, were, perhaps, the most interesting. That is to say, if you excepted Khâsia, the big soft shepherd who came down sometimes from the grassy, fir-crowned slopes higher up the gorge, the Maha-bân or Great Forest Hills beyond which lay the Black Mountain.

A strange wild country is this of the Indus gorge just as the great river begins to think of the level plains in front of it. A strange wild people are those who live in that close-packed, flat-roofed village upon the shale slope, where a footfall sends the thin leaves of mica-schist slithering away into the rushing river. There is no stranger country, no wilder people. For this is Sitâna, the place of refuge for every Moham-medan fanatic who finds the more

<sup>1</sup> Copyright in the United States.



civilised plains too hot even for his fiery faith ; Sitâna, the dwelling-place of the Syyuds who, since the days of their great leader Ahmad, have spent their lives in killing every hell-doomed infidel they can get hold of in cold blood. And as the pigs of Hindus live on the other side of the rushing river, it follows that those who kill must also swim, since there is no bridge far or near. That was why Hussan and Husayn, and many another of their sort, with carefully oiled thews and sinews of bronze, would go down the shale slope on dark nights and slip softly into the ice-cold stream. Then, if there was a glint of moon, you could see them caught in the great upward curve of the mad current inshore, the two skin bladders that were slung under their armpits making it look as if six dark heads, not two, were drifting down and down, yet somehow drifting nearer and nearer to the other side where the pigs of Hindus were to be found. But even a glint of moon kept them, as a rule, talking of future nights, unless there was some cause to raise their recklessness to fever-height. For even that glint was enough to make the police watchers on the other, the English, side slip softly also into the stream and give chase. A strange, wild chase indeed it was ; down and down in the dark till the blockade was run, or the venture abandoned for another night. Or stranger, wilder still, two men with knives met on the crest of the current and fought a strange, bloodless fight, hacking at the bladders because they were larger than the head, and the loss of them meant equally certain disablement. For there was nothing to be done in that wild stream if they were pricked but to cast them free and dive, to dive down and down past the current, to come up, please God ! nearer home.

So, because of those watchers on the other side, the Sitâna swimmers could not start openly, nor from the same place. They went singly, silently, but the next morning ere the light came fully they would all be resting together on the steps of the little mosque ; unless, indeed, some of them had not returned, were, in fact, to return no more. And the worshippers would be crowding round one or two, perhaps, while the others looked on enviously to hear how some traveller had been happened upon and done to death in the dark upon the undulating tract of low jungle on the other side. Then the worshippers going home would say casually in their houses : "Hussan killed his man last night ; that makes him two ahead of Husayn. And Ahmad, the new one, hath another, so that brings him next to Husayn, who will need to work hard." And the women would gossip about it among themselves, and say that, of course, Miriam, the village-beauty, would choose the best swimmer when the time came for the curious choice which is allowed the Pathan girl among lovers whom she is supposed never to have seen. As yet, however, Miriam had only laughed, and thrown handfuls of yellow corn into the gutter, and said things to the aspirants' female relations which were sure to be repeated and make the rivalry run fiercer than ever. She did all this partly because of the big shepherd, partly because it was good for the faith to stimulate the young men's courage, but mostly because it amused her.

It was far, however, from having that effect on the Englishman who was responsible for the reputation of the district over the water. The more so because his name happened to be John Nicholson, and John Nicholson was not a man to allow any increase of crime within his borders without

knowing the reason why, and meting out punishment for the offence.

"What the deuce does it mean?" he said to the trembling native official in charge of that particular portion of the country which lay over against Sitâna. "There have been twenty murders this quarter against ten in the last; and I told you that for every man killed on our side there were to be two in Sitâna. What on earth are your swimmers about? If they are not so good as theirs, get others. Get something! There must be some fault on your part, or they wouldn't cock their tails up in this way. Remedy it; that is what you have got to do, so don't ask questions as to how it is to be done. I'll back you up, never fear."

And then he took his telescope out, as he sate on his horse among the low bushes down by the rushing river, and prospected before he galloped off, neck or nothing, as his fashion was, to regain his camp thirty miles away, and write an urgent letter to Government detailing fully the measures which he intended to adopt for the repression of these scandalous crimes. But even a telescope did not show him Miriam's face as she sate spinning in the courtyard. And the rest of the long, low, flat-roofed village clinging to the shaly slope seemed very much at its usual; that is to say, the commonplace nest of as uncommon a set of religious scoundrels as could be found north or south. So he told himself that they must have been strengthened lately by a new contingent of fanatics from the plains, or that the approaching Mohurram-tide had raised their religious fervour to boiling-point. He allowed these reasons to himself, though he permitted none to his subordinate; but neither he nor the scared police-inspector dreamed of that laughing girl's face over the water which was the cause

of Hussan and Husayn's unusual activity. Still as he gathered his reins into his left hand he paused to give a more kindly look from under his dark eyebrows at the inspector's knock-knees. "Why don't you get some of their swimmers?" he asked curtly. "I could." Doubtless he could; he was a man who got most things which he set himself to get. Yet even he might have failed here but for that girl's face, that handful of yellow Indian corn, and the fierce fight which followed for both between those two, Hussan and Husayn, who, as they were finally held back from each other by soothing, friendly hands, felt that the end was nigh if it had not already come. Brothers of the same belief, fellow-workers in that stream of Death, first and second alternately in the great race for men's lives, they knew that the time had come when they must be at each other's throat and settle which was to be best once and for all,—which was to be best in Miriam's eyes. And then to their blind wrath came an authoritative voice, the voice of the holiest man there, the Syyud Ahmad, whom to disobey was to be accursed. "There is too much of this brawling," came the fiat. "'Tis a disgrace. Lo, Hussan, Husayn, here among the elders, swear before the Lord to have done with it. Swear that neither will raise hand again against a hand that fights for the same cause. Swear, both of you!" A chorus of approval came from the bystanders as those two, thus checked, stood glaring at each other. There were a few grains of the yellow Indian corn still in the gutter at their feet; and they looked at them as they swore never again to raise a hand against one fighting the good fight.

That same day, at dusk, Hussan and Husayn sate on the edge of the stream, their feet almost touching the water, their skin-bladders beside them,



their sharp knives hung in a sheath round their necks. Their bronze muscles shone even in the growing gloom; from head to foot they were lithe, strong, graceful in their very strength. They sate close to each other as they had often sate before, looking out over the tumbling rush of the wild current, to the other side of the river.

"Yea! Then I will go forth to-night as thou sayest, Hussan; and when I return equal, we will draw lots which is to take service on the other side."

"So be it, Husayn; I will wait for thee. And see, if thou couldst kill one of their swimmers, 'twere better. Then will it be easier to get his place. Hit up, brother, from the water; 'tis more deadly than the downward stroke."

And as they sate side by side, speaking quietly, almost indifferently, the evening call to prayer rang out over the wild wicked stream, and without another word they faced round from the river to the western hills. The parapet of Miriam's house stood out higher than the rest of the village. Perhaps they made it the Kaaba of their prayers, though they were orthodox enough in their genuflexions.

"Hussan and Husayn have been made, by the Pir Sahib, to swear they will not fight any more," said a girl, who giggled as she spoke, to Miriam when they were coming back with their water-pots from the river.

"*Loh!* there be plenty others who will," answered the round sweet voice that had not yet come to its full sweetness and roundness. "They are all like fighting-cocks, except the shepherds. Belike 'tis the sheep which make them peaceful, so they have time to laugh. Hussan and Husayn are ever breathless from some struggle. I would not be as they."

No. 433.—VOL. LXXIII.

"Lazybones!" retorted the giggler. "Thy mother-in-law will need her tongue. Thy water-pot is but half-full even now."

"Still, it is heavy enough for my arms," replied the sweet voice indifferently, yet sharply, "and the river is far." Then it added inconsequently: "But there are streams up in the hills that folk can guide to their doors. And the grass grows soft too. Here is nothing but stones; I hate them; they are so hard."

"And the big shepherd's mother is dead," put in another girl pertly; whereat the rest giggled louder than ever.

Was it Hussan or Husayn who, three days afterwards, appeared suddenly before the District-officer in camp with a nicely written petition on a regulation sheet of English-made paper, requesting that he might be put on as a swimming patrol on the river opposite Sitâna in place of one who was supposed to have been killed or drowned? There is no need to know. No need to know which it was who won the toss when Husayn came back with a smile to say that, so far, they were quits and might begin a new game. Whichever it was, John Nicholson looked at the lean bronze thews and sinews approvingly, and then asked the one crucial question, "Can you?"

The man smiled, a quick broad smile. "None better, Huzoor, on the Indus. There is one, over the water, who deems himself my match. God knows if he is."

John Nicholson, who had bent over his writing again, glanced up hastily. "So that is it. Here, Moonsee, write an order to the man at Khânpur to put this man on at once." He was back at his writing almost before the order was ended, and in the silence which followed under the white wings of the tent set wide to all the winds

of heaven, the sound of two pens could be heard. One was the Englishman's, writing a report to headquarters saying that the increase of crime must be checked by reprisals, the other bidding the inspector put on the bearer as a Government swimmer.

"For signature, Huzoor," came a deferential voice, and the still-busy pen shifted itself to the shiny paper laid beside it, and the dark, keen, kindly eyes looked up once more for half a second. "Well, good luck to you. I hope you'll kill him, whoever he is."

"By the help of God, Huzoor, by the help of God!"

Which was it, Hussan or Husayn, who in the growing dusk walked up and down the shaly glacis below the long cluster of Sitâna, watching the opposite bank with the eyes of a lynx for each stone of vantage, each shallow whence a few yards' start might be gained? Which was it, Husayn or Hussan, who in the same dusk paced up and down the low bank on the other side watching in his turn, with untiring eyes, for the quicker curve of the current where a bold swimmer might by one swift venture drift down faster to the calmer water, and so have a second or two in which to regain breath ere the fight began? What matters it whether the panther was on the western bank and the leopard on the eastern? They were two wild beasts pacing up and down, up and down, with their feet upon the water's edge; up and down, up and down, even when the moon rose and their shadows showed more distinctly than they did themselves, for the oil upon their limbs caught the light keenly like the glistening shale and the glistening wet sand at their feet. Up and down, up and down, they paced, in the stillness and the peace, with only the noise of the rushing river, slumberously, monotonously

insistent; up and down, up and down till the cry of the Muezzim at dawn came echoing over the water: *Prayer is more than sleep! Prayer is more than sleep!* Ay! more even than sleeplessness with sheer murder in heart and brain. So peace fell between those two while they turned towards Mecca and prayed, for what, God knows. Perhaps once more the real spiritual Kaaba was what they saw with the eyes of the flesh; that flat-roofed house just beginning to blush rosy in the earliest rays of the rising sun; more probably it was not, since they had passed through love to hatred. And then, prayers over, murder was over also for the time, since they could not court detection by daylight.

"They are wondrous keen on the other side, despite the moon," said the elders of the village and the officials over the way, alike; "but there is no fear our watchman will be taken at a disadvantage. He is there from dusk till dawn."

"Ay!" replied wiseacres on either side; "but when the moon wanes, what then?"

It came even before that, came with a great purple mass of thunderclouds making the Black Mountain beyond the Mahabân deserve its name, and drawing two pair of eyes, one on either side of the stream, into giving hopeful glances at the slow majestic march of gloom across the sky. It was dusk an hour sooner, dawn an hour later than usual that night and day, so there was plenty of time for sheer murder before prayer-time. And as there was no storm, no thunder after all, but only the heavy clouds hanging like a curtain over the moon, a faint splash into the rushing river might have been heard some time in the night, followed by another. Then after a while a cry broke the brooding silence above the hurrying whisper below, the cry of

faith, and fate, and fight: *Allah-ho-Akhbar ! Allah-ho-hukk !* Perhaps it was the Muezzim again, proclaiming out of due time that God is Might and Right; or maybe it was those two swimmers in the river as they caught sight of each other in the whirling water. If so, Hussan struck upwards from the water, no doubt, and Husayn, mindful of advice, followed suit; and so the six black heads must have gone drifting down stream peacefully, save for the hatred in the two faces glaring at each other, since the river hid their blows decorously. But there was no trace of them on it far or near when the sun rose over the eastern hills, and the big shepherd, singing a guttural love-song, came leaping down the stony path towards Sitâna with a bunch

of red rhododendrons behind his ear.

Some days afterwards, however, the native official at the Police Station rode over to see his superior, and reported with a smirk that he had seen through the telescope a great weeping and wailing at Sitâna. Two of their swimmers had apparently been killed in fair fight, for their bodies had been brought up for burial from the backwater further down the river; and as the new man, whom the Huzoor had appointed, had either absconded or been killed also, that just made the proportion what his Honour had laid down for future guidance, two to one.

"H'm!" said John Nicholson half to himself; "I wonder which of the two was really the better man."

## FROM THE NOTE-BOOK OF A COUNTRY DOCTOR.

THE other day as I,—a country doctor in a remote part of Cornwall,—was driving home from one of the longest rounds on which my profession calls me, I occupied myself in thinking of the vast difference which I see between my rustic neighbours and the inhabitants of more thickly peopled regions of England. I could indeed without much difficulty make out an excellent case for concluding that this difference is in some respects to the advantage of the Cornish; but putting such controversy aside, I greatly doubt whether it can be understood by any save those who have lived among these people how strangely their thoughts and actions are mingled with the traditions and superstitions of the past. Dead faiths and dead beliefs lie about this country side like withered leaves in autumn. My feet rustle in them wherever I go; and from day to day I encounter some hoary fragment of antiquity brought forth from a memory where the tradition of centuries has planted it, and displayed not as a curiosity, but as the ground of some important action.

It was not merely a wandering fancy which set my thoughts in this train as my horse trotted homewards across the breezy down. A singular instance had been presented to me that very afternoon of the amazing durability which is sometimes possessed by the formula of an old belief, keeping the husk in existence long years after the kernel has withered away. I had been visiting a patient at a farm high on the border of the moor; an old woman, the widow of a freeholder, and coming herself of a family whose record in the parish where she

dwelt could be traced back almost to the first pages of the church registers. My patient leads a lonely life in her distant farm, and is generally eager for such news as I can give her on the days of my periodical visits. My chief piece of intelligence on the day in question was that a relation of my own, whom she had once seen, was about to be married. The old woman was greatly interested, and asked the name of the bride. On hearing that it was Margaretta, she at once assured me that was a lucky name, and begged me most earnestly to let the bridegroom know how to reap the full advantage of the luck; he must, it seemed, pluck a daisy on the eve of the marriage, draw it three times through the wedding ring, and repeat each time, very slowly, the words, "Saint Margaretta or her nobs."

But what, I asked, did this mystic formula mean? To my ears it sounded like pure gibberish, and I hinted as much. But my patient, though quite unable to assign any definite meaning to the words, harped always back to the conviction that they were lucky, and pleaded this so earnestly that I should have given her real offence if I had seemed to doubt it. Promising therefore that my relation should be duly warned how to secure his luck, I took my leave, wondering rather idly whether the nonsensical words had originally any meaning at all. It was not until far on my homeward journey that it flashed suddenly into my mind that the words were a prayer, "*Sancta Margaretta, ora pro nobis*," a genuine Latin intercession, handed down from Roman Catholic time. Who knows with what rapture of devotion in days

long past Saint Margaret's prayer had been repeated in that very farmstead by the lips of men and women taught to feel a personal devotion to the Saint ; and though now even the holy character of the words is forgotten, yet the fact that they have been kept in memory through so many generations, in never so corrupt a form, proves the strength of the feeling which once sanctified them, showing that in some one's mind the prayer was stored up not to be forgotten, with a lingering trust that it would bring a blessing yet.

It was, as I said, this rather striking incident which turned my thoughts to the strange empire which the traditions of the past exercise over the lives of the people in this country ; and my mind reverted to a scene which I had witnessed a few months before, the like of which can very rarely have been seen outside Cornwall.

Driving home in the dark one wintry evening after a long day's work, I saw a little group of people entering a solitary cottage by the roadside. The woman who passed in first was in tears. I knew her well ; she was the tenant of the cottage and wife of a sailor whose ship was long overdue. Another woman, who seemed to be trying to console her, passed in with her, while the third member of the party, an old fisherman with whom I have held many curious conversations both before and since that evening, remained standing by the roadside. He greeted me, and I pulled up my horse. "Any fresh trouble there, Peter?" I asked. "Ez, zur," he answered ; "poor Jan's drooned." "That's bad news indeed," said I. "Then you have heard that the ship is really lost?" "Naw, zur," was the reply ; "oonly poor Jan." "I don't understand you," I said ; "is the ship safe then?" "Uz doan't knaw about the ship, zur. Betty she said

hur couldn't goo on like this waitin' and waitin', and not knawin' whether her man was dead or alive. So she went and called 'n on the shore,—— down by the watter," he added, seeing that I did not understand him. "Well, and what happened? Did you go with her?" "Ez, zur," he answered in his slow way ; "and Tamson Rickard over to Polmorth, and Betty her stood at the edge of the watter, crying out, 'Oh, Jan, my man, my good man ;' till Tamson catches her by the arm and tells her to hush ; an' then, just very low, we heard 'n answer." The old man shook his head and stepped back to allow me to proceed. There was something in his manner so solemn and dignified as effectually to check any disposition to pry further. He had the aspect of one who had indeed been present at an actual communing with the dead. The widow called her husband ; they all heard the spirit answer ; so much might be told, but what remained was sacred to the bereaved woman's grief. I drove on after a few words of sympathy ; and as I followed the coast road beneath which the winter surges were beating heavily in the darkness, and glanced out at the line of foam across which the drowned sailor had answered the cry of his desolate wife, I began to wonder whether there might not be truth in some things, at least, across which we have long since drawn the bar of incredulity.

Near the little town in which I dwell a tidal river flows down to the sea through a deep and wide valley, or rather a gorge in the hills. The fresh-water stream winds like a narrow riband through the wide expanse of sand which fills the bottom of the valley ; and at low tide foot-passengers cross the water on a bridge consisting of a single plank, while vehicles of all kinds drive through a ford close by. At the proper time

this is safe enough ; but when the tide begins to flow, the salt water races through the gorge with astonishing speed ; the little foot-bridge is submerged, and the ford, even at the first coming of the tide, is easily missed.

The river has an evil reputation. Countless disasters have occurred there ; and the souls of drowned men and women are perpetually flitting to and fro across the waste of sand, in the guise of little birds, pointing out to the traveller where the footing is secure. So runs one of the traditions ; and indeed the valley is infested by flocks of birds. But there is another sign of warning in this river-bed, especially by night and when the salt water is streaming fast over the sandy flats. Then as the wayfarer pauses in doubt whether he can reach the foot-bridge, or the farmer in his gig hesitates before dashing into that wide stream which is fast drowning the ford, while his mare snorts and plunges as the water ripples round her feet in the darkness, suddenly a hoarse shriek resounds close beside him, a wild inarticulate cry, which the least superstitious man might interpret as a note of warning. It is the crake, and for many miles there is no man, woman, or child who, having once heard that scream, will not turn and go five miles round rather than cross the river-bed that day. Whence the warning comes, if indeed it be one, I know not. Some say the shriek is from a bird ; others again philosophise about noises in the wet sand ; while most of the peasants can tell a wild story about a wicked man who perished at the crossing in the endeavour to bring a priest to the bedside of a dying woman. His one good deed rescued his soul from utter damnation, and won for him the privilege of flying for ever about the scene of his act of self-sacrifice, gifted

with the power of warning others in this wild way against the danger which proved fatal to himself.

There is an easy wisdom in smiling at such stories when one reads them in a warm well-lighted room ; but I have not always felt them ludicrous while driving down into the river-valley on a winter evening, chilled and wearied by a long day's work. On such a night, when the hills are shrouded with vapour, the very sound of the surf beating on the rocks is enough to fill a man's fancy with strange thoughts ; and I take no shame in admitting that it is sometimes an effort to drive the traditions of the place from my mind. But enough of these uncanny matters ; I have brighter pages in my note-book, and as I turn them over many a half-forgotten incident starts to life again.

It would probably surprise many good people who are accustomed to put confidence in their doctor, to know with how many others that confidence has to be shared in Cornwall. White witches, gipsies, wandering quacks, all dispute my pre-eminence, while my patients play off one of us against another with inexhaustible skill, or shall I say impudence ? This has long ceased to wound my vanity. I can tell the story of my old friend Mary without a pang.

Mary, let me say, was on the whole the most contented person I ever knew. She dwelt in a little hovel beside the open road which cuts across the downs, a structure looking as if it had been thrown together hastily to shelter sheep, and so unfit for a human habitation that I used to wonder that it was not condemned by the local surveyor. Mary suffered from heart-disease ; neither my skill nor the whole demonology could make her any better, or save her from



occasional attacks of violent pain. She had a continual hankering after witchcraft, and though I did my best to persuade her not to risk any charlatanism, I knew she would turn from me to the demons at last; so that when she came to meet me one day with a smiling face, saying cheerfully, "Sha'n't want 'ee no moor after to-day, thank 'ee kindly, zur," I had no doubt what had occurred.

"Why, Mary, have you got well all of a sudden?" I asked, getting down from my dog-cart. "No more aches and pains?" "I can't tell, zur," she answered, still smiling hopefully, "but I've found out what's the matter with me." "Have you indeed?" I said. "I have an idea about that too, but tell me yours." She was ready enough to tell me, since she felt really obliged for my care, and thought it might be useful to me to know that my diagnosis was all wrong. It was no such thing as heart-disease that troubled her; somebody had "laid a load" upon her, and she was going to Truro to find out who it was. Her information was derived from a wandering gipsy, who had called at her house on the previous evening, and who had supported her credit by telling Mary the following striking and authentic tale.

There lived a few miles away a small farmer called John Hocken (Mary said she knew him well, but I have reason to doubt this), who to judge from the gipsy's description of him must have been a worthy person with a rasping manner. At any rate he was by no means so popular among his neighbours as his solid virtues might have led one to expect. In fact Hocken had enemies, as he was soon to discover. One morning he was on his way to market with three fine calves, for which he hoped to obtain a good price. On the way he met a neighbour, who stopped to

pass the time of day. "Wheer be gooin', Jan?" Jan explained, and the other turned to look at the cattle. "Vine beasts," he admitted after a critical examination. "What do 'ee want for them?" "What I can get," replied John cautiously, whereon the other promptly offered him ten shillings a head, an offer which John put aside as too foolish to need an answer, and went on his road, leaving the keen bargainer casting sour looks after him. John on his part thought no more of the matter. When he reached the fair he saw no calves so good as his. Everybody admired them, but still no one bought; and when night came John had no choice but to drive them home again, which he did in a very bad temper. But this misfortune proved as nothing beside that which confronted him the next morning when he found all his fine young calves dead in the cow-house. This was a serious calamity; but John had still three pigs fit for sale, and he at once set out for St. ——— where it happened to be market day, driving the pigs before him. The road was not the same by which he had driven the calves, and it was curious that when he had got about half-way he should meet again with the man whom he had encountered on the previous day. There was something about the man's look, too, which John did not like; so he preserved a rigid silence when accosted, and deigned no answer to the question where he was going. The man walked on beside him for a little way, plying him with questions, and at last turned down a by-way, observing as he went, with one of his sour looks, "You might as well have dealt with me, John." John was glad to see him go; but something seemed to be wrong with the pigs. They grunted, staggered about, and finally, lying down in the dust, were in a few minutes as

dead as the calves. John began to see that something more than common was the matter with his affairs; but, upset as he was by the serious loss he had sustained, his chief feeling was a conviction that the powers of darkness were employed against him. He drew the carcasses under the shadow of the hedge, and set off home as fast as he could go. He was nearly there when some one looked over a stile and asked in a sour voice, "How's your wife, John?" John needed not to look to see who it was. Terror seized him and he fairly took to his heels. When he reached home he had to run at once for the doctor, for his wife had had a fit, and lay dangerously ill for many days.

Now here, as Mary triumphantly pointed out to me, was a case which I could not have mended in the least. It was clear enough that "a load" had been laid on poor John Hocken. Well, and to whom did he go to get it taken off? Not to a doctor; that was the point! He went to the White Witch in Truro!

I always pique myself on knowing my place, so as soon as Mary put the matter to me in this light, I saw there was nothing left to do but to express a humble hope that the witch might succeed where I had failed, and to pay Mary's omnibus-fare into Truro, which I did accordingly, parting with her on the best of terms. Poor Mary was back on my hands ere long, neither better nor worse for the witch's remedies; but she never would tell me exactly what had happened. I suspect she was treated in the same manner as another old patient of mine who had had two paralytic strokes, but who might have lived for years if she could have kept the witches out of her head. As ill luck would have it there came to her house one day a learned gentleman who said that for three guineas he

would rub her all over with something that smoked, and the temptation of this novel mode of treatment was too much for her. The witch promised to cure her, and so he did, not only from paralysis, but from all other earthly ills besides. I have my doubts whether he ought not to have been prosecuted for it.

Mary was also called Jecholiah, a name popular enough in my neighbourhood, but so little known elsewhere except at Scripture-readings that it may not be uninteresting to put on record the circumstances to which it owes its popularity in the West.

Jecholiah, the first of that name who made any figure in profane history, was the last, or thousandth, wife of the giant Bolster, a hero of ancient times when giants were common in the world, or at least in that important portion of it which is now called Cornwall. The deeds of Bolster would fill a volume; but it is only with his views on matrimony that the story of Jecholiah is concerned. In Bolster's opinion the proper and natural duration of that state was one calendar year. There appears to be in some quarters in the present day a disposition to approve of varied matrimonial relations; and in such quarters interest will be felt in Bolster's simple and direct method of securing the desired sequence of wives. An ideal which had worn out was to him a thing of jest; and so every year, on the anniversary of his wedding, his practice was to set his wife on the top of Saint Agnes' Beacon and throw rocks at her until he killed her. The blocks of granite still lie all over the hillside, proving the truth of the story; and so the system went on bringing annual relief and satisfaction to its author until he married Jecholiah.

Now Jecholiah seems to have been

a good wife in everything but her reluctance to go away when she was no longer wanted. She could not rise to the height of self-denial which her husband expected of her; and when her year of office had nearly expired, she appealed to Saint Agnes for help. Saint Agnes came to the rescue willingly, not having been entirely pleased this long while with the use to which her beacon was put; and she made a treacherous suggestion to Jecholiah, who demeaned herself sufficiently to entertain it, thus showing how quickly even the best of wives fall to pieces morally when they begin to conspire against their husbands. Saint Agnes gave Jecholiah full instructions, and despatched that deceitful woman home again to meet her husband with a smiling face.

The next morning Jecholiah, still wreathed in smiles, led her husband up to the shaft of a mine which opened on a pleasant hillside overlooking the sea; and there Bolster, throwing himself at length on the turf, opened a vein in his arm. This was his invariable custom as the time for putting his wife away came near; for the exercise was severe, and he found it well to carry off any little surfeit in advance. He always bled himself a mine-shaft full, no more and no less; and though he had not used this shaft before, he thought it would do as well as any other, while Jecholiah seemed to wish to go that way. So she sat by his head singing softly some sleepy song, and from time to time looking behind his head at the sea which was now beginning to be covered with a dark red flush. Bolster grew drowsy; he looked again and again to see if the shaft were not full, but there was still no sign of blood near the top. At last, full of strange suspicions, he rose tottering to his feet and looked around him. The sea as far as the horizon was red with his blood, flowing like a river, leagues on leagues

from land. The very sky had caught the reflection, and flamed like a brilliant sunset. The mine had an exit to the sea, and the life-blood of the trustful giant had flowed out before he saw the trick.

The story of Jecholiah has led me away from the subject of witchcraft, which indeed is so common in these parts that many volumes might be filled with the account of the remarkable expedients resorted to by the wise women for curing the incurable. The collection of such facts should be something more than a work of idle curiosity, for the lore of these ignorant old men and women is almost invariably traditional; a rubbish-heap, perhaps, yet one which carefully sorted helps in its way to reconstruct the past. I have sometimes thought that both my income and my popularity might be materially increased if I were to treat my patients with the charms in which, though betrayed by them over and over again, they yet have more faith than in all my drugs.

Grace Rickard came to me a few weeks ago complaining that she could no longer hear the grunting of her pigs as they routed about in the early morning, though this was the signal which had roused her daily ever since she was a child. What could be done I did; but not even the great specialist who trained me could undo the corrosion of old age, and it was necessary at last to tell poor Grace that her hearing was destroyed. She departed so tearful and despondent that when passing her little farm a short time after, I thought it would be kind to look in. Grace was sitting before the fire, seeming quite cheerful. On her knee was a large piece of board, over which she was deeply engrossed; and as the door opened I heard her say, very solemnly, "Lord, deliver me from my sins." This pious prayer was followed by a strange sort of strangling noise which seemed so

alarming that I came forward quickly. Grace laughed out loud when she saw my face; "Dawn't 'ee be frited, zur," she said; "'tes aunly a sneeze." "It's the oddest sneeze I ever heard," I answered; "why can't you sneeze in the ordinary way? It's much safer." "So I do, when I can," she explained; "but now 'tes got up to nine times running, and wherever to get nine sneezes from is moor'n I knaw." This was not very comprehensible; but on investigation it appeared that what Grace had upon her lap was an infallible cure for deafness, of such a simple description as to place it within the reach of the meanest purse. Nothing indeed is needed but a small bit of board and a packet of stout pins. Every morning a pin is stuck firmly into the board; the patient crosses the two fore-fingers and lays them over the pin, saying aloud, "Lord, deliver me from my sins," and at the same moment must sneeze violently. The first day this is a simple matter; but on the next, when there are two pins in the board, two sneezes must be produced, the next day three, and so on; and as it is not everybody who is able to sneeze an indefinite number of times at will, the difficulty in which poor Grace found herself is sure to arise at last. Unhappily this difficulty is fatal to the remedy, as Grace discovered in the end. But as she is too just to blame anybody but herself for her inability to carry out the conditions, the reputation of the cure remains as high as ever.

The faith which grounds itself on such remedies as these is of course traditionary, to be classed with the fancy that the herb vervain blesses the ground for three feet round the spot on which it grows, or that the best of all remedies for many ailments from which children suffer is a blessed shilling (that is to say one taken from the communion-plate) tied round the neck. Its root is in the past. It

was grown and watered by that splendid isolation which left Cornwall during whole centuries untouched by the thought of the rest of England, a medieval county when all the others had become modern; and it flourishes still, a wide-spreading tree of superstition, whose shadow will extend far and wide over the West Country for ages yet to come. For my own part I would not have it otherwise. When I try to realise how much poorer and duller life will be when the shutters are put up in the cottage of the White Witch, when even the children are too wise to stop and turn their stockings as they pass the corner where the pixies are, and when by night or day no one is afraid to cross the river valley any more, I find myself dwelling fondly on the memory of an old man, a patient of mine against his will, who was much depressed in his last illness by the fear that it might not be his last. It was my bill he was afraid of, though I did my best to assure him there would be none; and when he found himself dying beyond any possibility of recall a cunning smile played over his face as almost with his last breath he whispered, "I've done 'ee now, Doctor, b'aint I? 'Ee can't send'n after I wheer I be gooin'." And so the old man put out on his voyage quite happily, sustained by the consciousness of having got for nothing all he could, up to the very last. My own hope is the same. I have dwelt here many years and have learned to love the follies at which I smiled at first. Year by year they pass away. The world is growing wiser; I have had my pleasure in its folly, and the day is coming when I shall be presented with the bill. But as my years are declining I hope that, like my old patient, I may escape it after all; and I hug the knowledge to my heart that no one can send it after me "wheer I be gooin'."

## THE IRISH PARTRIDGE.

It is the morning of the twentieth of September, the opening day of partridge-shooting in Ireland. The scene is the stable-yard of a house in the midlands of that distressful but delightful country. Across it our old friend, Mike Dooley, is making his way under difficulties that would be too much for most men, towards a side-car which is standing ready for action. Mike has a gun-case in each hand, a big game-bag and two or three cartridge-pouches round his shoulders, while a couple of frantic red setters, who have wound their chains several times round each of his legs and are pulling in different directions, dispute every foot of his advance.

Nowhere in the two kingdoms is the feast of St. Partridge celebrated more seriously than on this estate, and the sport is worthy of it; for there can hardly be less than ten thousand acres of enclosed country within its limits, not to speak of illimitable stretches of mountain and vast wastes of flat bog; and these are preserved as well as the circumstances of Ireland will permit even to a popular and life-long resident and a keen sportsman.

What a bustle there would be in an English establishment that controlled such an acreage on the morning of the First! What a posse of guns, what a bunch of keepers; what a collection of henchmen generally, and what a pack of retrievers! If there is nothing of that sort here the fact simply indicates the necessary difference in the method of pursuit followed in England and Ireland respec-

tively. No house-parties are organised in the latter country for systematic attacks on the partridge. There are not enough birds, the cynic might remark, and with some justice; but a still stronger reason is that in Ireland the partridge is shot over dogs and neither walked up by a line of guns nor driven. Nor indeed is it merely shot to dogs, as is still the case in some rough corners of England, because the pleasant method is possible rather than absolutely necessary. The pointer and the setter in Ireland are not a pleasing and picturesque accompaniment of sport, but a vital necessity from the first day of partridge-shooting till the last. Now no one who knew what he was about would willingly shoot over dogs in an enclosed country with more than two companions, and as a rule with more than one. So the Irish sportsman, whether his boundaries be wide or limited, goes quietly out upon his business with a single neighbour or friend; and when birds are not too scarce he enjoys one of the most perfect forms of sport to be found to-day within the limits of the British Isles.

It had been our good fortune for many seasons to be, as upon the present occasion, the sole companions of one of the keenest sportsmen in Ireland over a country that embodies to a peculiar extent every element that renders shooting enjoyable both to the animal and æsthetic senses; enjoyable, that is to say, to any one who is content with helping to kill ten brace of birds in a day.

The drops of the past night's showers are blown in our faces by a soft west



wind as we drive through sombre rows of beeches and, for a brief time, grass-lands fat as Leicestershire. If we are a small party, we are a sufficiently noisy and turbulent one, and that through no excess of wilful boisterousness on either Mike's part or our own; but an outside car is not the handiest vehicle on which to convey a load of powerful and obstreperous dogs. Mike alone for the first half-mile, in spite of his chains and his long practice at the game and his frantic invocations to the saints, would be absolutely helpless in the medley of kicking legs and writhing frames and bellowing throats, if we did not all three take a strenuous hand in the encounter. There is no particle of either fear or rage in this commotion, but simply uncontrollable excitement, which repeats itself every season and every shooting-day of every season. In course of time, however, we manage to get the upper hand, and leaving Mike sitting upon their heads in some sort of fashion, emerge somewhat ruffled from the fray, Tom (my host) to his neglected responsibilities with the ribbons, and Tom's companion to a survey of the familiar scenes through which we are once more travelling. There, some six or seven miles away to the southward, the big swell of the mountains fills the horizon, and over their russet sides the shadows of the clouds are racing before the morning breeze which, with recent showers, promises that important accompaniment to Irish shooting, a good scent; though who indeed will guarantee that wonderful thing but a very youthful or a very unsophisticated sportsman? It is for the foot-hills of those mountains we are bound, for they constitute the outside beat of the shooting, and it is well in Ireland to make sure of outlying districts as soon as possible, lest peradventure, in spite of everything,

somebody else may shoot them for you.

As amid a comparative calm among our four-footed passengers we bowl along towards our destination it may not be amiss to offer a few remarks on partridge-shooting in Ireland generally, since it is such a wholly different business from the same sport upon this side of St. George's Channel; and also because we fancy that Englishmen do not connect Ireland with partridges at all, believing it to be the haunt purely of woodcock, snipe, and grouse. The season, as we have said, is not marked in any social way. The few big magnates who preserve pheasants sufficiently to invite English guests to help to shoot them trouble themselves little as a rule with partridges in Ireland. Walking for fifteen or twenty miles behind dogs for a possible eight or ten brace does not recommend itself to people who have the world for their sporting-ground; while the independent sportsman from this side only goes to Ireland for cock and snipe and, in a lesser degree, for that not very certain quantity, the Irish grouse. To him Ireland means the Wild West, as indeed it mostly seems to mean to Englishmen in general when they think or speak of the country in a political or social sense. But a small fraction of Irishmen, after all, live in this western fringe, and from its nature no partridges worth mentioning. Over the greater part of Ireland, however, except in some parts of Ulster perhaps and a few regions where social conditions have made their extermination possible, the birds are as plentiful upon an average probably as in such English counties as Devon, Cornwall, or parts of South Wales. But, as we have implied, the conditions under which the Irish bird lives, that is to say amid boundless cover, and the fashion in which it is necessarily fol-

lowed, give to the small bags of Ireland a special and altogether peculiar zest.

One hears much in Ireland of the decrease of birds. The evidence of good judges however, sportsmen whose personal experiences or undoubted records go back for half a century, does not entirely endorse this opinion. It is probable that the supply of partridges in Ireland is to-day very much what it always was, which, by the way, for some not very discernible cause, is not the case with snipe. Fifty years ago we know to a certainty that a single gun could pick his shots and kill thirty or forty couple of snipe in a day; such performances are now absolutely out of the question. The comparative scarcity of partridge in Ireland must be attributed to other reasons than "trespass in pursuit of game." Given every advantage, the country, for some reason or other, like parts of the west of England, does not seem suitable for carrying a full crop of birds, though, as in Devonshire, you would suppose that there was sufficient grain grown for all practical purposes. Ireland is not in any sense preserved as England is, and almost everywhere vermin and birds of prey work their own wild will. What a difference this makes even to partridges every sportsman knows. As to human depredators, by far the larger part of partridge-carrying Ireland is protected from poachers by amateur custodians, either large tenants of their own free will, or by small ones retained at slight annual fees as watchers. Then again there are great numbers of gentlemen occupying or owning small estates of a few hundred acres who can with comparative ease preserve their birds. There are here and there hopeless districts, no doubt, where poaching is part of the unrest, and the attempt

to stem it has been abandoned in despair; but these are, we think, exceptions. As a general thing the small farmer in Ireland has no especially dark designs upon his landlord's game. In the districts we know best, which are very typical, the few large tenants notably, and most of the smaller ones, are anxious, we believe, to keep the birds intact for whoever has the legitimate right to shoot them; while those who do not cherish that admirable sentiment, hardly care to run the risk of any practical demonstration of their opinions. Even hares, which might fairly be reckoned as long ago doomed to extirpation in a country like Ireland, seeing what has happened in most parts of England, spring up by no means infrequently in the rough pasture-fields or on the bogs. The Irish poacher, it may be observed, is as often as not a man of otherwise respectable position who poaches either from love of sport or from spite; he has a setter and shoots your birds in almost as sportsman-like a fashion as you would yourselves, and does it mostly upon a Sunday. As partridge-shooting is not, for many reasons, a generally leasable property, as in England, sporting-rights are often deputed in a loose and confused fashion which leads not seldom to incidents of a humorous description, such as fill the neighbourhood with huge delight. Not long ago, for instance, though the incident is not strictly relevant to the aforesaid statement, a really admirable drama was enacted not a hundred miles from Dublin, which made a whole country-side entirely happy for months. The actors in it were two brothers, middle-aged bachelors, descendants of an ancient stock, who had sunk, however, to the position of very dilapidated squireens. The family residence and a hundred acres of land around it were all that remained of the former grandeur. The

elder brother inhabited the house; the younger dwelt in the old porter's lodge at the gate; and they were supposed to make a precarious living by trading horses with people who knew less about horse-flesh than themselves, and these were many. They were, however, bitter enemies and had scarcely interchanged a word for years, so the liberality which allowed the younger brother to inhabit the lodge was a beautiful concession to the tradition of family honour. The elder brother, as owner of the property, claimed and duly exercised the sole right of shooting over the demesne which usually carried two coveys of birds. The year in question was an exceptionally good one, and there were reported to be three or even four. Now among the smaller and less provident sort of sportsmen in Ireland there is always a feverish demand for dogs just before the season opens. And upon this occasion the elder brother, having doubtless included the family pointer in a horse-deal, or lost him at cards, found himself forced to make strenuous efforts at the last moment to replace the now sorely needed quadruped. He was so far successful that upon the eve of the twentieth he brought home a duly qualified pointer and, shutting him up in the stable, went off to dream of the three big coveys which dwelt upon the demesne, or just off it, for a boundary fence is not quite the sacred barrier in Ireland that it is in Norfolk. But the younger brother at the lodge not only knew all the time about the unusual stock of birds, but he knew all about the pointer as well, and his soul was moved within him. The temptation was too great; he arose stealthily before daylight on the following morning, extracted the pointer from the stable, and, before the chief of the clan, whose over-night potations were always generous, had realised that or any other fact, had

made such a hole in the three coveys that there was barely stock enough left to keep up the sporting character of the estate for another season. We need not say that this audacious individual was the hero of the hour. A successful practical joke, or any performance akin to it, is relished in the Sister Island with a gusto that the cold Englishman cannot conceive. Even the victim is not always able to withhold his admiration; and it is said that the elder brother was so touched by the audacity of his junior that not only did resentment die within him, but he actually made such advances to reconciliation that the two now drink their nightly punch in company, and upon the 20th of September pursue together the ancestral coveys in fraternal amity.

But all this time we are drawing nearer to the mountains. The low country, with its familiar characteristics, is fast tailing off into wilder scenes; the small enclosures with their gorse-covered banks are being left behind. The rough-looking pasture fields, the patches of barley or oat stubbles still bearing the stooks of uncarried grain, the strips of swedes shining green and dewy above the black boggy soil, the variegated masses of flowering weeds which cover the potatoes just ripe for the spade, the fresh green meadows not yet all cleared of the small hand-stacks of the late hay-crop, will soon be spread like a map beneath us. We have passed through the long straggling village, with its neat bare chapel, and squalid cabins, and smart police-barracks. Small farmsteads, long and low, whitewashed, one-storied, and thatch-roofed, fronted by the traditional manure-heap and flanked by the newly finished turf-stack, thrust themselves upon the road, now on one side, now on the other. Sometimes an old stone bridge lifts us over a

brawling stream that raises memories of many a basketful of plump brown trout in Aprils long gone by. Here and there too, standing back from the highway, are more pretentious dwellings embowered in trees, where half a century ago squireens were having their last fling before the great famine broke up the anomaly of their existence. Dilapidated wooden gates now cling crazily on to pretentious stone pillars that once supported a more dignified form of portal, and what was once a carriage-drive is now but a miry lane rent deep by cart-tracks. Decayed gentility has left its mark in the plantations which with time and neglect have grown into such a mass of sombre and tangled woodland that the high road beneath them is even at noontide almost dark as night, and the wood-pigeons, who with needless alarm break from the boughs at our approach, make a noise like thunder in their efforts to gain the outer air. Hitherto the road has been lively enough with travellers: donkey-carts piloted by wrinkled old women who shout blessings of a fearsome sort upon our heads; small farmers on foot, conveyed sometimes by the traditional pig who leads them townwards by a rope tied round his hinder leg; larger farmers in gigs or side-cars; pedestrians of every rural rank from the barefooted gossoon to the sleek and well-fed priest. Always, however, there is the graceful greeting which may or may not cover all sorts of insincerities, but is at any rate a pleasant contrast to the surly grunt or blank stare of the North Briton. Sometimes too we are signalled by vehement and even impassioned gestures to pull up, and a swarthy whiskered farmer, in tones of suppressed emotion, begs for "a word with yer Honour." A stranger would suppose there was some fearful mystery afoot, that a blunderbuss lay

levelled at the next corner, or at least that substantial abatement of rent was the subject in hand. For Pat looks carefully up and down the road, as if the very crows swinging on the tall ash above our heads, or the more cautious magpie perched upon yonder thorn, would hear the fateful secret and bear it to the four winds. Then with his hand to his mouth, out it comes: "There's a great pack, yer Honour, in the tillage beyant my house. I met it last night, Sorr, and there's fourteen birds in it. Glory be to God!" Tom's face meanwhile assumes the solemn and inscrutable expression that comes, we fancy, of a life spent in hearing and weighing the statements of Hibernian peasants; and it is not till we are on our way again that this piece of information is pronounced to be entirely trustworthy or pure fiction.

We draw rein finally at the hospitable door of a flourishing Protestant farmer, whose place fringes upon the mountain and forms the invariable base of attack upon the birds of this beat. The occupant is a thorough sportsman, a first-rate shot, and keeps a watchful eye over both grouse and partridges. Lifted socially above the class whose fear of one another and of "informing" is infinitely stronger than their inclinations, he can construe the hints and winks of his humbler neighbours as they are meant to be construed, and take measures accordingly.

The regular custodian of the beat, Mr. Timothy Moriarty, is waiting for us in the yard and bubbling over with information as to the condition of his coveys. Of course the tails of his long coat are in streamers, and his hat looks as if it had received two or three charges of shot in the crown and then been rolled in the bog; but that means nothing or less than nothing, for Tim is probably better off than our friend the Squire's keeper in

Blankshire. He has a farm of fifty Irish acres of very fair land and a big range on the mountain, for which he pays £22 a year; and an allowance of £10 is paid him by the estate for acting as custodian of the game upon this beat. Tim is a Parnellite, like most of the farmers along the base of the mountains hereabouts. The reasons of this partiality for Mr. Redmond at the poll, if investigated, would most likely be found to spring from motives wholly local and entirely irrelevant to Ireland's destiny. But Tim is a very militant Parnellite, and is said to have broken the heads of more McCarthyites than any man in the barony. Whatever his political motives may be, as a keeper he has proved himself completely worthy of trust; and when there is any cause for suspecting foul play he will get on his horse and ride straight to head-quarters ten miles off, and come as near calling names as could be reasonably expected, so near indeed that his employers can fill up the blanks without difficulty. Tim's birds, at any rate, are always there; his coveys are not found wanting when the test comes, and there is no keeper in the United Kingdom more entirely proud than he when Mister Tom tops all previous bags upon his beat. It is sometimes said that Father Burke, who has the charge of souls in Ballykilly hard by, is responsible for Tim's animosity to Mr. Justin McCarthy. His Reverence is a bit of a sportsman, and small blame to him, and has come in contact once or twice with Tim's professional duties. Father Burke's excuse has been that the grandfather of the present proprietor is said to have given a remote predecessor of his in the vicarship some sporting liberties. As both these individuals have been mouldering in their graves for half a century at least, the plea is not good enough for either Tim or his employers,

though it is really not so absurd a one as it sounds to English ears. Tim entirely repudiates his political bias arising from such friction; but when a covey appears to be not at home we always banter him with the suggestion that his Reverence has got them, and it never fails in its effect. "Begor, yer Honour, sure if Father Burke was to shoot ivery blessed day of the wake, it's not a bird that you'd be afther missin', for it's divil a one he'd iver hit, and that's God's truth."

Away go Rose and Grouse, dashing like mad things over the great enclosure behind the house; a typical stretch of covert, rough shaggy pasture plentifully sprinkled with rush-beds and clusters of gorse, and fringed all round with briary fences, while above it the long roll of the heathery mountain sweeps to the sky-line. Tim tramps along, looking preternaturally solemn and yet quizzical with his comical furrowed face, and exaggerated Milesian jawbone, for he has staked his reputation on the covey whose haunts we are approaching. Mike, laden with game-bag, lunch, and cartridges, and jingling with dog-chains, follows behind, ready at the first point to take his perch upon a wall and mark with his well-trained eye the strong mountain-partridges scudding away upward over the brown heather or downward over the network of furzy banks that divide the pastures. We can remember the time, many years ago, when Mike as a beardless youth was first entered to partridges, and cherished the delusion that when a covey dipped over a wall or a furze-brake he had them down. This immaturity, coupled with the Hibernian desire to please, cost us many a blighted hope; but Mike is now equal to any marker in Ireland, and birds have to fly with strength or cunning indeed to escape his eagle eye. A couple of small fields and a



couple of big fences, and we are on the edge of the region where Tim's first covey is said to lie: a tillage-field, divided as usual between a grain-stubble and a strip of swedes and potatoes; a rough pasture-field or two; an enclosure gone back altogether to heather and rushes; and beyond again the boundless stretch of the mountain. In the potatoes is their owner, the inevitable accompaniment to the Irish partridge-season, trying with his long-handled spade the first few rows. He is full of details, as usual, of the great pack which, under Tim's vigilant eye or perhaps from worthier motives, he has left severely alone. He has "riz 'em the night before," as he always has; and there are "fourteen birds in it, yer Honour, God bless 'em!" as there generally are. It would be easy enough in smooth-shaven England to find a covey so definitely located. A few clean stubbles or pastures to walk, a field of turnips or clover to drive the birds into, and the thing is done. But it is astonishing what elusive powers the Irish partridge with his wide choice of refuge displays, and how often he will defy the search of the finest dogs handled by sportsmen who have the patience of a former generation and possess their almost lost art of hunting dogs scientifically where cover is plentiful and game both cunning and scarce.

"Yander's thim, Sorr!" sings out our agricultural friend as he points with his spade to where, over a heathery field abutting on the mountain, a covey of birds can be faintly seen skimming over the russet ground. They are grouse, of course; but in this wild country, a common haunt both of grouse and partridge, the mistake for a moment at such a distance is pardonable. Every inch of likely ground seems on this occasion to be hunted in vain. The patches of heather, the strips of rank, sedgy

grass, the gorse-brakes, the ragged fences yield no partridge, though there is ample evidence they have been there that morning.

"They must be on the mountain, Tim."

"Sure, and that's just where they are, Sorr!"

But Rose, after all, thinks not. She pays no heed to the whistle, which with her good manners in the field is significant, and Mike is ordered back on to the top of the wall we have negotiated to see what is up.

"Rose has 'em, Sorr!" Mike in the field at any rate uses as few words as possible, but they are always to the point. And there, sure enough, at the far end of the somewhat bare common we drew as a forlorn hope, and thought we had drawn blank, the little red dog is creeping with stiff tail up to the gorse-covered bank that divides the far end of it from territory that had been pronounced outside the range of the birds. Up the bank she goes with deliberate cautiousness of movement, and over the top, and long before we can get up to her we know by instinct she is standing on the other side.

Does the most hard-bitten sportsman ever walk up to a distant point with quite that leisurely nonchalance recommended in books to the tyro? We think not. By the time we are on the fence-top our breathing, no doubt, is not quite regular; but there is Rose right under us, standing like a rock, with the covey no doubt under her nose in a patch of heather and rushes.

We are now confronted with a situation common enough in the pursuit of the Irish partridge; we have to jump for it, not a drop merely of six feet, but a ditch of at least that width as well. We often wonder how we shall manage these little affairs in say, ten years' time. There is no

scrambling evasion possible, and we launch ourselves into space at the same instant. No covey could be expected to lie still under such a concussion, and the moment we strike the ground they rise, as we expected. It is sharp work, having to cock your gun and get in both barrels; but it is wonderful what practice and necessity will do, and we manage to stop three of Tim's fourteen birds before they break into two packs as Irish coveys so often do at the first flush.

Tim, who has mounted on the fence behind us, has one lot marked; Mike, whose lanky figure is outlined against the sky three hundred yards off, no doubt has the other. The potato-digger was left with strict injunctions to stand still. The excitement was too much for him, however, as it so often is with the rural spectator on these occasions, and creeping up close to the fence near the line of fire, he had got a pellet off a twig in his cheek. We will do Pat the justice to say he would not dream of making such an accident the basis of a financial consideration, like some of our friends nearer home. On the contrary, he apologises for being in the way while Tim picks the pellet out with a blunt knife and much friendly banter all round, for Pat is a staunch political supporter of Father Burke, and the situation is for a moment almost critical.

One great advantage of shooting over dogs is that, in comparison with other styles, it is eminently sociable. Your dogs do the entire work of finding the game, subject of course to that supervision which to an experienced sportsman in a familiar country is a natural instinct. In the long intervals that may elapse between disposing of one covey and finding another you have not to walk fifty yards apart, in silence, with an eye to the dressing of the line, and your finger, so

to speak, upon the trigger. We do not mean to suggest that a good day's partridge-shooting is dearly purchased by such obvious and necessary precautions, due to short stubbles and machinery; but they are neutral accomplishments that call for neither individuality, nor skill, nor any quality on the part of the rank and file, at any rate, of the squad, except to keep awake and shoot straight. Now when following a brace of free-ranging and trustworthy dogs in Ireland, and some other countries much further off that we wot of, there is not only the satisfaction of watching their performances, but the sociability of an ordinary country ramble is at the same time possible. The sustained tension inseparable from walking up birds is removed; the business of the day is done in clearly defined, brief periods of excitement; the intervals are spent with a mind comparatively at ease. In the course of such a day as this one hears indeed the whole news of the countryside. While we are hunting for the covey that is known to inhabit the forty Irish acres occupied by Mr. Cornelius O'Flaherty, that gentleman himself puts in an appearance as a matter of course; he has much to say about many and various things, and says it in a fashion sometimes so wholly humorous that it would be almost worth while going to pay him a visit without the motive of his partridges. As we leave him to finish setting up his barley-stooks, and his birds, after a vain quest perhaps, for another day, Tim has comments and criticisms to make upon this same Cornelius that, whether just or not, will be entirely delightful to listen to. And as we cross the ridge and drop down into the hollow where, in a thatched and whitewashed farm-house surrounded by a cluster of small pasture and tillage fields, dwells Mr. Daniell O'Sulli-

van, that worthy also is waiting for us. He owes Heaven knows how many years' rent, but has been offered a clear receipt for the payment of one. Eloquence is his misfortune, and he thinks (though, we have heard, erroneously,) that it will bring him better terms. He begins upon the covey that he has watched with the eye of a father from the day it was hatched out, about which Tim, however, has always been anxious, and invents another one of eleven birds, at which the custodian of the chase chuckles with a brutal frankness almost worthy of a Saxon. We then have a recapitulation of the year's disasters. This does not in the least affect our progress from a sporting point of view, any more than a band at a regimental mess prevents you paying attention to your dinner. And Dan, who is perfectly well known to have the money ready, has just declared his intention of coming down next court-day to exchange it for a general absolution, when Rose comes to a dead stand in the potatoes and Grouse backs her like a statue.

Sometimes, however, we are on the open mountain for half the day, for in fine weather the birds from the cultivated fringe at its foot will wander far up into grouse-land, where the coveys in the rank heather scatter beautifully, and point after point is made, and bird after bird is killed, under conditions that would seem to belong entirely to grouse-shooting.

The outlook from these high latitudes is magnificent at any time, but beneath the shadows and sunshine, the brilliant gleams, the scudding storms of an Irish autumn, it is inexpressibly lovely. It is much more than that. It is teeming with human interest and that indescribable pathos that distinguishes nearly all Irish landscape. It is not a view, like some of those in remoter and tourist-

haunted Ireland, that has little or nothing behind its physical beauties but impossible legends of devils and saints and mythical kings, adapted to the eloquence of the car-driver and the intelligence, no doubt, of many of his passengers. It is a far cry from Tipperary to the Irish Sea, but there on the one hand, piled up like great gray clouds upon the horizon, the Galtee mountains mark the site of the turbulent and famous town; while here upon the opposing limit of vision, the soft and billowy outlines of romantic Wicklow are scarcely less distinct. Far to the north, somewhere in Roscommon or Westmeath, a large lake sparkles for a moment only like a mirror flashed in the sun, while upon the southern sky-line the lonely mass of Slievenaman springs high above those pastoral regions through which the strenuous Suir works his way towards the sea. They are no question of a painter's canvas, these vast illimitable sweeps of vision. They seem to us, if it is not presumptuous to say so, to strike a deeper note than anything art alone can sound, and awake feelings of a kind that are only in a secondary sense æsthetic. One's emotions are, after all, but the play of a capricious fancy, the outcome of influences in which literature of some sort or other probably plays a leading part. If, for instance, one has wandered off the ordinary track so far as to have two or three centuries of Irish history fairly well imprinted on one's brain, there is something in Irish landscape that harmonises to an extraordinary degree with the melancholy fascination of the tale. The very chaos and turbulence of the whole thing give a strange sort of charm, for instance, to yonder fragment of ruin beneath us that looks out over the four or five miles of darkling bog. It is comparatively modern, yet no one, save a few

archæologists perhaps in Dublin, knows its history ; but we dare swear it is a grim enough one, and witnessed deeds at which even a contemporary Englishman's blood would have turned cold. Tom cares for none of these things, though his remote forbears were militant patriots and mustered strong enough as the war cry of *Butler aboo !* sounded over the green ridges which separate Kilkenny from the central shires, and which are plainly visible from the pinnacle on which we are

now standing. He is helping to make history in an honest, practical, conscientious fashion, and so perhaps is Tim, though upon other lines. And we are not doing even that, but dreaming on a hill-top about what is long since past and done with ; while Mike has gone in search of some spring-water, that with the help of our own flasks we may celebrate what Tim calls a "great day" before starting on our long homeward march.

## A BRIDE ELECT.

## CHAPTER I.

DEAR GODMAMMA DORCAS,—You promised Dad when I was a child,—before I could run alone, I believe—that you would come to my wedding, and we are going now to claim fulfilment, so you must pack up your boxes forthwith. I am to be married in a fortnight, very quietly, in the church at home. It has all been fixed in a great hurry; Dick wanted to wait till the spring, but I said *no*. I was not going to stand another winter in Ditchborough if I could help it. I told him he could take me or leave me, so he is going to take me,—of course. It is to be as quiet as possible,—indeed nobody has been told in the neighbourhood; but the village people are so inquisitive and the servants will talk, so I am afraid it is not as secret as I should wish. Not a soul is to be asked but Dick's father and mother, and one of his married sisters and yourself. Janie will be my only bridesmaid; and there will be nobody to pair with her, as Dick is not having a best man. It is all nonsense about best men; they are no good for anything. Mother says I must have a white dress and a veil, and she is getting her way; but for my own part I would like better to wear a garden hat and an ulster, and go off from the church-door. Dick would not care. Besides if a girl is ever to have her own way, it should be when she is married; for that only happens once as a rule,—like being born, or dying at the end of everything when one is old. Mother sends her love to you, and hopes you will come on Wednesday week. She is going to write to you to-morrow to give the invitation properly,—not necessary I tell her, as you will take it from me. Besides you know you promised,—twenty years ago. There is nothing to stand in the way, as you are giving up your old women and dirty children and close courts.—What a place the East End must be, with nothing but docks and warehouses and people out of work! How you have stood it for five years I can't imagine,—and never a

holiday to come and see us, or go anywhere else!

Your affectionate god-daughter, and  
cousin once removed,

BARBARA ALLEYNE.

I took off my spectacles, and laid down the letter. I had not needed them indeed, for the writing was big and black, and took up so much space it ought to have been plain, even to more failing eyes than mine. There was not a great deal in the letter, and yet it had managed to sprawl over three sheets of note-paper, and the dashing signature did not come till quite at the bottom of the last page. I was conscious of a certain sense of discomfort with the writer,—of disappointment even—which did not sit upon me easily. I had to take myself to task with a reminder that I was behind my age, and had little in common with the new generation so fast growing up; but it seemed strange that a girl should write so flippantly of the most solemn event in her life,—strange she should be the one to press for immediate marriage when the bridegroom proposed delay,—strange she should have no regrets to express over quitting the safe shelter of home, the father and mother who idolised her if ever a child yet had been idolised by doting parents. It was not like the Barbara Alleyne I remembered,—the long-legged, fresh-hearted hoyden with whom I had been much in sympathy; a Barbara of many scrapes and quick affections, hardly at all sobered but much encumbered by the womanly length of skirt with which she had



lately been endued, more to her embarrassment than pride. But five years work changes in all of us,—even from forty-three to forty-eight, and much more so from fifteen to twenty, the age Barbara had now attained. I must be prepared for that blossoming into young maturity which does not always unfold the colour of the bud.

My name is not Dorcas at all, but Susan Varney ; and I am first cousin to Barbara's parents, standing in equal relation to them both, for the Varneys intermarried on either side, both with the Alleynes and the Frosts. Gregory Alleyne, Eleanor Frost, and I were much together as children, being nearly of an age, and with a degree of brotherly and sisterly intimacy all round which is generally thought to prevent the sequence of nearer ties. But when Gregory went into the Church and was able to look about him early for a wife, being in moderately affluent circumstances, unlike the ordinary run of young clergymen, it was Eleanor Frost whom he asked to share his parsonage and his prospects, and stop the war of pulling caps for him which was being waged by the maiden ladies of the parish ; a town parish in those days, not Ditchborough ; for Ditchborough has been the retirement of his middle life.

When I say there was always a certain rivalry between Eleanor Frost and me (not incompatible with cousinly friendship), I must be distinctly understood that the rivalry was never in Gregory's affections. I might have thought, and did think, that my cousin could have chosen more wisely when he threw his clerical handkerchief to Eleanor ; but I had never entertained the least wish or expectation that it should fall in my direction. That I am a single woman is by no means because Gregory Alleyne passed me by. I do not say there

has been no hidden reason, but the history of it is quite apart from anything I have now to tell.

I never came near Eleanor in appearance. She was a handsome, stately girl, a sort of ideal Juno, full and rounded in figure and looking older than her years. I was thin and brown like all the Varneys, and with crisp hair which could not be brushed into the satin smoothness fashionable in our early youth. I think Eleanor was secretly annoyed that her one daughter resembled the Varneys rather than herself ; though it was natural enough, seeing that Barbara inherited Varney blood on both sides of her descent, which doubtless accounted for her opening a pair of dark eyes on the world, while her thick brown hair curled closely over her pretty head, and could not be induced to grow long.

I am, as I have said, a single woman ; and having in these later days no ties or duties to anchor me domestically, I sought them for myself by joining a lay sisterhood working in the parish of St. Cyprian's in the East. I pledged myself for five years,—the five years Barbara wrote about—and that is why she took it into her head to dub me Dorcas. For four out of the five years my work prospered, and I found it almost as engrossing as I hoped ; but in the fifth my health broke down, and after weeks of hospital (as a patient this time and not a helper) I resolved to take back my liberty now that my term of service was fulfilled. Barbara's invitation happened opportunely, and it was endorsed the day following by a letter from Mrs. Alleyne, begging me to remain with them for a time after the wedding, and take a real rest under their roof.

I had never been to Ditchborough. Gregory Alleyne had proved a rolling-stone, and this country parish was his fourth remove from the town-parsonage

of which Eleanor had consented to be mistress. Very dull it had been described to me, and absolutely rural ; but it had the advantage of good emolument and a large commodious house, as well as diminished work which would give Gregory more leisure for his literary labours. I did not think much of these, but his wife did, as was natural. As for the rural dulness of Ditchborough, I confess this appeared to me its chiefest attraction. After years of bricks and mortar and crowded courts, I longed inexpressibly for woods and furzy wastes, green fields and lanes with thick embowering hedges, the country stillness and sweet air, the homely farmyards and the breath of kine. I used to dream of them in my narrow hospital bed between the heats of fever, and wake with a sick longing which in the depression of that time would fill my eyes with tears. All this would now be mine to enjoy ; and though chill December was upon us and the long winter had still to be worn through, I should be in the midst of the gradual quickening and unfolding of spring, and perhaps see the full glory of summer and the gold of autumn, if I stayed out the year of which my cousins had spoken.

It was a bitter cold day in the week before Christmas when at last I turned my back on London, and with good store of luggage and books, as befitted a visit of the length proposed to me, set out northwards for Blankshire. Everything was locked in a black frost which promised well for the skaters, and the clear pale sky did not as yet threaten any downfall of snow. Christmas fell on a Thursday in this year, and Barbara's wedding was fixed for the Saturday before, the third day after my arrival. I knew the parents were both approving her choice ; Eleanor had mentioned it as a matter of congratulation when she wrote at the

end of October to announce the engagement. Sir Richard and Lady Sudeleigh were old friends, and Dick, their second son, had inherited a good fortune from a distant relative, and could afford the life of a country gentleman, though he had been educated for a profession. I knew later that his tastes were chiefly nautical ; he had a large and well-found yacht, and his honeymoon was to be spent mainly in the Mediterranean. The young people had been thrown together in the autumn at the seaside ; and the whole family seemed, by Eleanor's account, to have fallen in love with Barbara, so her reception was a cordial one. "It was no surprise to me," Eleanor wrote ; "I had foreseen it from the beginning, and felt certain of all but my child's feelings ; Barbara is so very reserved. But to Gregory it was quite unexpected, for he had taken the odd notion into his head that Dick was attracted by Janie. As if any one would look at Janie when Barbara was by !"

Perhaps I had better explain that Janie was also a cousin, on the Frost side of the family. She was the daughter of Alice Frost, who had married Colonel Moorhouse and lived only a year to bear the altered name. Colonel Moorhouse did not long remain a widower, and there came to be a large second family. Janie was supposed not to be very happy with her stepmother ; so when Eleanor was arranging for her daughter's education at home, and wished it to be shared by a girl about her own age, Janie was installed at the Alleynes' as Barbara's companion, and as such had now lived with them for ten years. I was glad to hear the marriage would not deprive her of her home, for I believe the Moorhouses had made it very plain they did not want her, and considered her quite a graft into the Alleyne stock. She called Mr. and

Mrs. Alleyne uncle and aunt, though the real relation was only cousinship. I had been sorry for the girl formerly, but had never noticed her much; Eleanor did not like it, and evidently entertained the idea that it was wholesome for Janie to be kept in the back-ground. Nothing irritated her so much as praise of the alien nestling, as by some curious process of mind she always interpreted it as censure on Barbara, or at least as a slight to her idol. Barbara, though kind in the main, was not too considerate, and the careless superiority she assumed might at times be galling. I wondered, as I watched from the window of the railway-carriage the wintry landscape flying past me, how Janie would appear under these altered conditions, and what amount of modest shining she would contribute now the eclipse of the greater luminary was to be withdrawn.

I had left London early, but it was close on four o'clock when after sundry changes I was put down at the small wayside station nearest to Ditch-borough. The station-master seemed quite stirred up to interest by any arrival out of the usual run of market traffic, and touched his hat very civilly as he helped to collect my parcels and boxes, which the guard was banging out upon the platform with every appearance of desperate haste. Mr. Alleyne was waiting outside for me, he told me confidentially, for the horse was a young and fidgety one, and he did not like to leave it. I might be easy about my belongings, as he would see them put into the cart which would be along by and by. I left with him a tangible expression of my gratitude, and betook myself outside, where I found Mr. Alleyne and the dog-cart, with the young horse apparently reluctant to stand on all four legs at once, somewhat to the embarrassment of his charioteer.

"How-do, Susan! He'll be all right directly—quiet, will you! No vice about him, but I am breaking him in to trains; as gentle as a lamb to drive;—you could manage him yourself; and you are not afraid of anything, or used not to be. Hi, Joe! just stand at his head for a moment while the lady gets in."

I managed to scramble up in a brief interval of quiescence; and when the fidgety young creature was released and speeding away with us along a level stretch of road, I found leisure to look at my companion. He was not much changed in the five years; the closely trimmed whiskers had grown a little grayer perhaps, but the same sweetness of expression and weakness of outline characterised the clean-shaven mouth and chin. He was keeping a close hand and watchful eye on his pupil, but found time for a spasmodic remark or two,—questions about my health, and whether I was afraid of an open carriage; there was some reason why the brougham could not be sent for me. Presently, as Red Saxon sobered to his work, conversation became easier, and of course the approaching wedding at once suggested itself.

"I am glad you and Eleanor like Mr. Sudeleigh so much; and knowing all his people as you do, you must feel happy about Barbara's prospects. And is she very much in love?"

"Dick is a good fellow. Yes; I am satisfied, and Eleanor is delighted. She has wished for it a long time, she tells me, before Barbara came to a marriageable age even; and his mother has always been her greatest friend. I believe this was one reason why she objected so much to the other affair. As for Barbara being very much in love,—well, I don't profess to understand girls. She is altered in many ways,—not half so lively as she used to be; but I suppose it is

only natural. Dick is very devoted ; he follows her about like her shadow, and she won't stir without him. She has quite given up her old active habits out-of-doors. I think she has felt all this being hurried on so, and I am sorry for it myself. They are both young, and could very well have waited ; and I was in no haste to lose my daughter."

I thought of Barbara's letter, and the avowal that the haste had been her own ; but one thing Gregory said had aroused my curiosity,—the other affair ! Our correspondence had, it is true, been irregular ; but no hint had reached me of another suitor for Barbara, though Eleanor was not a person likely to be reticent about her daughter's conquests. We had been climbing a hill, and at the summit found ourselves on a wide heathy waste, crisped white with the hoar frost, and with the sun going down behind it, a broad shield of crimson in the west. Just beyond the cross-roads a horseman rode rapidly past us, and I saw that he and Mr. Alleyne exchanged salutations. I did not notice him particularly in the dusk, except that he seemed to sit his horse well, but looked elderly.

"That is one of my parishioners, but not one of my flock," said Gregory as the sound of hoof-beats died away in the distance.

"An alien in religion ?" I asked.

"Well, yes. I believe Redworth belongs to the Greek Church ; he was brought up in Armenia, and hinted as much to me on one occasion. But he has been my very good friend ever since he came to Ditchborough, which was not long after I was presented to the living."

"It is not a large parish, Eleanor tells me. I am glad you have a neighbour of your own class."

"Yes, Redworth is the sole representative of the resident gentry ; the

farms are all small holdings. But he is only the tenant of Coldhope, and may not continue there much longer. You see his house among the trees, and the church and rectory are at the foot of the hill."

We were now on the brow of another descent, which led down into a wide valley. I could see a large red-brick mansion half hidden among the sere woods, while the gray squat tower of the church rose below.

"Rather a handsome house," went on Gregory ; "of the Queen Anne period, I believe, or else the early Georgian. It belongs to the Beryngtons, a Roman Catholic family ; but they cannot afford to keep it up, and are obliged to let."

"And what brought Mr. Redworth to Ditchborough ?"

"Ah, that is a question which has been asked before. I believe the true answer is our absolute rural stagnation ; the very reason why most people would stay away ! Redworth is a scholar and an experimental chemist to boot, and a man of very advanced views on most subjects. He is pursuing some researches for which absolute retirement and quiet are essential ; and I imagine the low rent and the big rooms attracted him. He leads a solitary kind of life there ; his servants are all foreigners and all men,—there is not a woman in the house."

"There is no Mrs. Redworth, then ?"

"No. You did not hear that he wished to marry Barbara ?"

This then was the other affair, to which allusion had been made. I replied in the negative, and Gregory went on, while Red Saxon was picking his way down the first steep pitch of hill.

"I was sorry about it—very ; but I am glad to say Redworth took it very sensibly, and it has not made any breach between us. It is more

than a year ago now. Barbara was barely nineteen; and with fifty years' disparity between them, and he not a Churchman, it was of course out of the question. Eleanor was right; I felt that all through; it was only when with him that I was inclined to waver. He is a curious man; most persuasive and fascinating, and young for his age,—in every way but the mere count of years a younger man than I am. He made me feel that I might be wrong in sacrificing my child's happiness to the world's opinion; for when pressed home it was that which was against him rather than my own,—the knowledge that such a union was unusual and might be condemned. And he thought the stupid prejudice of the village people had affected Eleanor."

"But Barbara! You say her happiness; surely she did not care for him?"

"No; she did not, as it turned out. But she was much attracted by him,—fascinated I think, and flattered by having a man of the world as her lover, and the romance of the thing altogether. Not much romance you will say, when the lover was hard upon seventy; but wait till you see him, wait till you know him, as you will do, before you flout the idea. I am sure she was favourable to him at the beginning; but they had a quarrel of some kind. I don't know what it was about; I don't know who was to blame, and I don't think Eleanor does. The child came to me in one of her passions,—she is very high-spirited,—with her cheeks white and her eyes shining, and said it must be all over; she would never marry him if she lived to be a hundred, and I was to tell him so. Then she broke down and cried her heart out, like the child she was; but she told us no more. I gathered afterwards, when I spoke to him, that she had given him some en-

couragement and a promise, conditional on my approval of course; but he never said a syllable of blame. All this happened a year ago; and he has continued to visit us, though not so frequently as before. I go now and then to spend the evening with him at Coldhope; he is a delightful companion,—has been all over the world, and has a wonderful store of out-of-the-way knowledge. He sent Barbara a wedding-present, though we had naturally avoided mention of her prospects. But I wish Eleanor would be more cordial."

I knew of old how immovable Eleanor was in her opinions, and smiled a little to myself. "You said the prejudice of the village people had affected her. What is that?"

"Oh, some ridiculous gossip about the supernatural. You would hardly think in this nineteenth century that people could be so credulous. Eleanor would never seriously believe in it, though the fact that such things had been said might affect her in a way,—you understand. Some nonsense about Redworth being a sort of male witch and having the evil eye; altogether too trivial to repeat. And he is exceedingly liberal to those about him, which makes it all the stranger; he subscribes to all our charities and church-repairs, and quite lately sent me a substantial cheque for distribution among the poor. We are nearly home now, Susan: there is the Rectory; and I wanted to say a word to prepare you. Eleanor has become quite an invalid latterly; she suffers very much at times. I had a first-rate opinion some time since, and it was very unfavourable; there is serious internal mischief. She was not told fully, but I believe she divined all I would have kept from her; and now her great anxiety is to conceal her state from Barbara; she does not want the child saddened now that she is leaving home. Say nothing



before Barbara if you think her changed. Janie knows, and I expect she will tell you herself, though she would not mention it by letter.—Here we are !”

## CHAPTER II.

THE Rectory was a big rambling house that ought to have been kept alive by the usual overflowing clerical family ; it seemed to me over-large for this one middle-aged couple whose only child was leaving them. It had been enlarged by a former rector who took pupils, and so was somewhat incongruous in design. But the general effect was one of abounding comfort on the evening of my arrival ; with the lighted windows shining out into the winter dusk, and the cheerful fires in the hall and in the drawing-room, where I was presently taken to see Eleanor. This was a double room with two doors and two fireplaces, each burning brightly ; but the only light in it other than the glowing hearths came from a shaded lamp on the table at Eleanor's elbow. She was changed undoubtedly ; there was a drawn look about her handsome face, and she rose from her chair to greet me with an infirmity quite other than the old indolence.

She gave me a kind welcome, and I was put near the fire to thaw after my cold drive, and assured tea would be in directly to assist the process. The young people were out ; they had hardly expected me so soon. Barbara and Dick were skating, and Janie had some parochial visiting to do for her uncle. The lovers were making the most of their time together, Eleanor said, for Dick had to go to Lynches-ter that evening to stay the night, and would not be back till late on the morrow. It was some business errand as I understood, and he had also to make arrangement for his relatives'

accommodation at the hotel on Friday night ; they were driving over on the morning of the wedding, and would stay Sunday at the Rectory. She was glad Barbara had gone out, she said. No one could get her out but Dick, and she thought in the five weeks they had been at home she had hardly crossed the threshold except to church unless he was with her. Of course there had been a great deal to do, and though almost everything was ordered from town, it had been quite a difficulty to get the trousseau ready in so short a time. I must see Barbara's things, for they were very nice ; and the wedding-dress was spread out on the bed in the little room at the head of the stairs, which was to be Sir Richard's dressing-room during his stay. “Janie will show it you,” she said ; “for I go up and down as little as I can help.”

It was not long before the young couple came in, quick steps outside, and gay young voices and laughter heralding their return. Barbara came first into the quiet room and the fire-light, all flushed with exercise and the keen air. Such a handsome Barbara ! The child I had left had grown into a beautiful young woman, tall and slender and upright as a dart, but with enough of the full development inherited from her mother to soften all her angles and round her into beauty ; as tall as I when we stood up face to face, and I kissed the damask of her cheek in return for her hearty embrace of welcome.

The father and mother both beamed at her with overflowing pride and tenderness, and the lines of pain smoothed out of Eleanor's face in her delight over her daughter. “Take off your hat, child,” said Gregory, “and show your cousin Susan what you are like.” Laughing and blushing she removed it and stood bare-headed, the crisp dusk hair pushed

away from her white forehead, and curling thickly behind her ears in defiance of fashion. But no one would have thought of calling her unfashionable; she had a style of her own, and was perfection in it in her own way.

"I always said it. She is like what you used to be, Susan. You two might be mother and daughter," broke out Gregory in his blundering way. Of course I made haste to disclaim; with truth and not with truth, for there was a likeness; but the girl stood before me, the substance of which I had been a shadow, original in all the beauty and brightness and the rose of complexion which I had lacked. If there was a moment of embarrassment it passed quickly, as she turned to present Mr. Sudeleigh. He shook hands and fell back into the shadow beside the chair she had taken, so I had only a brief impression of a pleasant smile which revealed a good set of teeth, and the general outline of a well-dressed figure. The servant came in with the tea-tray, and Barbara signed to have it set beside her, and began to busy herself over the cups.

"Don't trouble yourself with that, my darling," said her mother rather fretfully. "Janie ought to be here to do it. I wonder where she is; she knew I wished to be punctual."

"And Janie wished to be punctual," said Barbara, dropping in her lumps of sugar with her lover at her elbow. "She did not by any means desire the detention,—did she, Dick? We found her on our way back sitting in the hedge, and looking just about to faint; you know how faint she turns when anything is the matter. Those plagues of school-children have been making slides all along the road, and Janie, mooning along, set her foot on one and came down with a twisted ankle. Dick wanted to carry her home, but she would not hear of it;

I believe she thought it would break his back, when she weighs about as much as a kitten. She was quite furious when I urged her,—a little turkey-cock of passion. She did not even want to have his arm, but there I insisted. She went in the back way, and I expect Fidgets is looking to her foot."

Mr. Sudeleigh bent over the tea maker and whispered something in a tone too low for me to catch; but his suggestion did not meet with favour.

"How ridiculous you are, Dick. You know she hates being fussed after, and what could I do when Fidgets is there? Fidgets has bound up all our wounds and bruises, and mended our frocks and scolded us, since we were *that* high. You remember our maid, godmamma? Mother calls her Evans, but she has always been Fidgets to me and Janie, and Fidgets she will remain till—what is the correct expression, Dick, the end of all things, or the crack of doom? You can have which you prefer."

Dick had the last cup of tea, and drank it scalding hot I think, for it was so near the time of his departure and his horse and cart,—stabled in these days at the Rectory—were already at the door, as sundry sounds made evident. "You had better go," said his betrothed at last, "before that animal of yours digs up the whole of the gravel. Hollins will not swear at her because he thinks it is not proper for a parson's servant; but I expect the unspoken anathemas are getting deep as he will have to be up early with the roller!" The adieux were not particularly tender or affecting; but there was a very real reluctance about the lover, and after he went a soberer mood seemed to close in upon Barbara. She held her pretty slim hands meditatively to the fire, and had not much to say to us till Eleanor called upon her,—that tire-

some Janie being still absent—to show me to my room.

I found it full of comfort, with a window looking eastwards to the morning, which is what I like, not being afraid of any nip of cold. That was a pleasant peaceful evening, full of chat over old times which would not interest any one but me. While we were at dinner the servant brought a note to the master of the house, saying, “From Coldhope, sir.”

“Is the messenger waiting?” said Gregory, turning over and scrutinising the envelope as people will do, when the broken seal would resolve any perplexity in an instant.

“No, sir. The man did say Mr. Redworth had left home.”

My cousin ran his eye rapidly over the contents,—a very few lines there appeared to be—and looked down the table to Eleanor. “Redworth has gone away,” he said, “so our difficulty about the invitation is solved. He says he is called to York, that his absence is uncertain, and that the matter of business on which he wanted to see me must stand over till next week. Susan and I met him as we drove from the station; he was riding that way, and no doubt meant to catch the 4.18 train to Hale Junction.”

I could not help glancing at Barbara. Her face was not very mobile, and perhaps it was only my fancy that she looked relieved; but the feeling with which I had been inclined to credit her was openly expressed by Eleanor. I had a good opportunity for observation, as I was placed on Gregory’s right hand and opposite the two girls; for Janie had made her appearance by dinner-time, still rather white and sick with the pain in her foot, and unable to walk without a limp.

A pretty girl was Janie in a different style to Barbara, but likely enough to be admired when seen apart

from her more brilliant beauty. Rather short and small altogether, with gray eyes and soft brown hair many shades darker than Eleanor’s; but there was the same shining of gold through it when you caught it in the light. The chief characteristic of the face was its extreme sensitiveness, the expression changing and the wild-rose complexion altering with every impulse of feeling. A very transparent little person I thought her that first evening; and with something beneath the transparency which I dimly guessed at and did not wholly relish. That was her evident emotion at any mention of Dick Sudeleigh. She blushed crimson when Mr. Alleyne joked about her ankle and the proposed transport home, but I should have thought nothing of that. What I noticed was that the least casual allusion to him on the part of the others brought an instant change of cheek and eye, and conscious discomfort on her part at the heightened colour. None of the others seemed to observe it; and had I made the comment, which was an impossibility, I should only have received some such careless assurance as that Janie was always blushing at nothing; it would be the same whoever you mentioned,—Mr. Redworth’s Hindu servant, or old Betty at the lodge. Any sudden speech was enough to make that foolish little person turn from white to pink, and from pink again to white.

The limp had not quite disappeared next day, though she was able to run up and down on many errands for her aunt and Barbara, and seemed to strive hard for a difficult cheerfulness. Barbara said once,—I suppose in allusion to the low spirits—“I don’t want any tears at my wedding. Mother won’t cry, and I am not likely to, nor you, godmamma; but I expect Janie will shed tears enough for all of

us. She is such a little stupid. I tell her I shall shake her if she begins, even if it is in the middle of the service. I dare say she will miss me, but not enough to cry over. You see I am not her real sister."

It never seemed to occur to the bride elect that there might be another source for Janie's tears; and I hoped I was mistaken in fancying a thing to which every one else was blind.

The two girls together showed me the wedding-outfit, not an extravagant one, but very ample and sufficient; and Fidgets was already filling the boxes,—flat trunks for the yachting tour—with summer garments suited to the South. The bridal gown was laid out, as Eleanor had said, in that little room at the head of the stairs which was made to serve as a dressing-closet; and Barbara herself lifted off the sheet and displayed the rich folds of creamy silk, severely plain with no attempt at ornament but the fichu of Flanders point which had belonged to Eleanor. The lace veil to be worn with it had also been her mother's. "The day after to-morrow," she said as she replaced the covering; "it seems no time at all now; and then you will see me in all my splendour."

Some diamond pins for fixing the veil had been given by the Sudeleighs; and these I saw with the other wedding-gifts locked away in a cupboard in the morning-room, which was really a Chubb safe let into the wall. The display came about through the presentation of my little offering to my godchild,—only a ring, but the stone, a fine emerald, had belonged to a common ancestress, and I had had it mounted in the modern style for her. She was very pleased with it and with the surrounding circle of small brilliants, and slipped it on her wedding-finger above the flashing hoop which was her lover's pledge. Eleanor was in the grip of pain which her

medicines could only deaden, not remove; but she seemed to find pleasure in uncovering and setting out the pretty things bestowed on Barbara by the few friends admitted to her confidence; not numerous on account of the hasty wedding being kept a secret except from the immediate families. Finally she took up an exquisite dagger, a slight thing double-edged, of dull blue steel as keen as any razor, but with a cross hilt of gold encrusted with rough gems.

"This came from Coldhope," she said, "and I wish there had been a sheath to it; it looks so formidable with this sharp blade. When Barbara undid the parcel she turned quite pale. It was an odd present to send her, but Mr. Redworth is an odd man. I do not care about him myself, but he is a great friend of Gregory's; Gregory likes odd people. We were not aware that Mr. Redworth knew the wedding had been fixed till this was sent. Barbara did not want any one told; but of course the servants knew, and it was talked of in the village. I must say I am glad he will be away for Saturday; we could hardly have avoided asking him as such a near neighbour and intimate friend, but there were—reasons which made it undesirable."

Gregory shut himself in his study through the morning, which was his invariable habit; but after luncheon he took me over the house, and then to see the church, which was seldom opened except for Sundays and for the saints'-day services. Part of the Rectory was very old, with low-pitched rooms and stone-flagged passages; but this had been made the servants' quarter, though the stair to the large attic lumber-room which surmounted these premises, the only room in the roof, went up from the more modern portion. Gregory said I must see everything now I had come to them at

last, and begin by going to the top ; so I climbed the steep narrow stair, and exclaimed at the pleasantness of the big place when reached. It would have made an ideal playroom for the house full of children one associates with a parsonage. The walls sloped of course with the roof and were destitute of plaster ; but the long room was well lighted with a window at either end in the gables, while the block of chimneys running up through it was at the side. Most of the space was heaped with stored boxes and superannuated furniture ; but it seemed to be in some sort of occupation, for a table was set near one of the windows, —a dilapidated affair propped up to be level, but books and drawing-materials were spread out over it which appeared to have been in recent use, while beside it stood an old straw chair and footstool, with a thick shawl hanging over the back of the former as if just cast aside.

"This is Janie's den," said my cousin. "I wonder she is not frozen up here in this weather. She is a good little girl, Susan, and you will like her, though of course she cannot be compared to Barbara. She used to have a room to herself down-stairs ; but when we came back from Filey after the engagement, Barbara was nervous and could not bear her old bedroom nor sleep by herself ; so Eleanor put the two girls together in the spare room. The one you have now was Barbara's. I never knew Janie out of temper but that once. She loves Barbara dearly, and why on earth she should have objected to sleep with her I cannot imagine. Eleanor said it was all nonsense and must not be encouraged, and she wanted Janie's bedroom as a sewing-room for the maids. So Janie moved her belongings up here ; she must have some place, she said, where she could go to be alone. For my

part"—with a laugh—"I would rather be warm in company than freeze in private, but every one to his taste."

I looked at the window-corner with a feeling of compassion. If I was right, if the girl had indeed given a first affection where there could be no return, it was natural she should crave for some solitude where she could hide her pain and do battle with a rebellious heart. I could picture the little lonely figure wrapped in the thick gray shawl against the cold, and could imagine the dusty lumber-room had witnessed bitter struggles and the falling of many salt tears. I too had known what it was to suffer, and as I followed Gregory down to the brighter and warmer regions below, I felt sorrier for Janie than I had done yet.

As we opened door after door of the lower rooms for a cursory glance, Gregory told me (in the under-tone he kept for that subject) how he hoped after the wedding to persuade Eleanor to establish herself altogether on the ground-floor, and convert the double drawing-room into bedroom and sitting-room for herself. "The stairs try her so much," he said, "but she will not make any change so long as Barbara is here to be distressed by the need for it. We are not likely now to do any entertaining, and there will be the morning-room if Janie has a friend."

The morning-room was a pleasant small apartment to the front, with a wide window and sunny aspect. The double drawing-room had been formed, they told me, by throwing into one the original drawing and dining-rooms when the house was enlarged. The present dining-room was a large one. The former rector had used it as a class-room for his pupils ; and I believe he had also built on the room which was Gregory's study, an excrescence at the side of the house reached by a long flagged passage leading out of the hall,



and with a door of its own into the garden. "Quite snug," he said rubbing his hands and glancing round with an air of pride, "and delightfully secure from interruption. You see this part of the garden is completely private, away both from the road and the yard. My predecessor used it as a parish-room, and at first the people were always coming through the side gate to this door; but I put a stop to all that."

The same hard frost prevailed everywhere when I went out to see the church. Gregory wanted Barbara to go with us, and at first she seemed well inclined, but finally said she would rather remain indoors,—she had letters to write. Janie was winding wools for Eleanor, so we went alone. The pleasure-grounds about the Rectory were not large, but there was a sheltered rose-garden open to the south, and a thick belt of shrubbery which screened the road; and on the other side was a flat space of lawn with accommodation for a couple of sets of tennis, and an orchard and two fields beyond. The shrubbery served also as a screen from the churchyard. The little gray church was very ancient, Gregory said, and the high worm-eaten pews had doubtless served many generations of worshippers. They were barely a quarter filled by the inhabitants of the scattered cottages; many of the people were lax church-goers, and a certain proportion of them were Catholics settled on the Beryngton's estate.

"I hope to bring about a reform in many ways," said the new rector looking about him, "but it will take time. Rome was not built in a day, you know, even in Italy; and certainly it would not have been at Ditchborough. We have begun, of course, with the chancel, and that is more to my mind than it was. You should have seen it when we came here! The main difficulty

of course is funds. There is hardly any one in the parish who could or would give anything, and I cannot be expected to bear all the expense single-handed. Redworth helped me with this, and it was the more generous of him because unsolicited; I could not have asked from one of a different communion. Now you have your bonnet on, Susan, you may as well walk up through the woods and look at Coldhope. Only the outside of the house, of course, as Redworth is away; but he begged us from the first to use the park and grounds as if they were our own. Barbara and Janie used constantly to go there sketching before,—before the difficulty I told you of."

The Coldhope woods bordered the opposite side of the road, and appeared to stretch for a considerable distance,—indeed Gregory told me the entrance-lodge was a quarter of a mile further on; but there was a door in the paling opposite the church, and a path wound up the hill through an evergreen undergrowth, the dark green foliage of which was pointed everywhere with the delicate lace-work of the frost. The bare trees stood in close rank, and their branches arched above us till "the skies were in a net." I made some remark on what would be the summer depth of shade, and Gregory said I must see it when the rhododendrons were in flower in early June, and before the leafage overhead had wholly outgrown the tender greens of spring. "Then you will indeed call it lovely, and Redworth will make you as free here as the rest of us; I am sure of that."

About ten minutes' brisk walking brought us to the point of view Gregory wished for, from which we could see the house. I did not think much of it, though I believe it is considered fine. I do not care for that stiff red-brick style with stone facings and

heavy pediments ; and it was hardly so large as I had fancied in the glimpse caught of it from the road above. A massive centre with one wing at right angles had rather an awkward effect ; but the garden lying round it looked attractive, and some pea-fowl were spreading themselves to the winter sunshine on the stone balustrades of the terrace. Mr. Redworth had his study and laboratory in the wing, Gregory told me. He was preparing a treatise on the ancient uses and symbolic metaphors of alchemy, and he was also an Egyptologist and a student of the methods of embalming practised in the land of the Pharaohs.

I listened to all this with half an ear as it were, for I was not greatly interested in the eccentric neighbour who seemed so important a figure on the scene of Ditchborough. What I really cared about was all the lovely background against which the prosaic red-brick house stood revealed ; the wide stretches of park, the faint blue of the distance, the brown woods rising to the sky-line, even the dead autumn leaves that crisped under my feet. I do not think Coldhope ever looked so fair to me again as on that first wintry afternoon, though I saw it later in all its changes to golden autumn from the first budding of spring.

### CHAPTER III.

DICK SUDELEIGH did not return till just before the dinner-hour ; and he ran up to his room to dress, begging us not to wait for him, so we all filed into the dining-room. Eleanor said Barbara must take the head of the table for her ; she had done so last night in my honour, but now she would revert to the arm-chair at the corner, which was her usual place. So Barbara sat opposite her father, and a very fair young hostess she made. She

was dressed that night in some shimmering gray stuff which had lace about it and a crimson breast-knot, and which opened low enough at the neck to show a slender chain of silver filigree that clasped her white throat. Janie sat opposite me, and the vacant place for Mr. Sudeleigh was between her and Barbara. She wore a white wool *barège* very simply fashioned ; I notice it because of a change later.

She was looking almost as pale as her gown when Mr. Sudeleigh came in with a laughing apology for his tardiness ; but as he passed to his seat, he bent over her with an inquiry about the ankle. He put a hand on her shoulder in brotherly fashion, and both the gesture and the speech were kind ;—too kind, for the quick colour rose hotly all over her face, and her eyes filled with tears. She managed some kind of stumbling answer ; and as he was appealed to instantly by Eleanor on another matter, her discomposure passed without notice except by me.

It seemed not unusual for her to be silent, and we others chatted and laughed on without her, seldom making any attempt to draw her into the conversation. But towards the end of the meal her mantle appeared to fall upon Barbara, who sat idly tracing an imaginary pattern on the cloth with a dessert-fork, so deep in thought that she look up bewildered when addressed. “What is the matter with you, child ?” said her father ; and instead of giving back as usual some jesting reply, she covered her face and shuddered. “I had bad dreams last night,” she said, “and I was thinking of them again. I am glad you spoke, for I do not want to go back to them any more.”

The shadow which had touched her seemed to spread with a certain chill to us all, and I think it was to cover it that Gregory began to talk in a joking way to Janie about it being her

turn next, asking how she would feel if she were in Barbara's place, so near to being a bride. I could have given the world to stop him, divining all the pain he was inflicting; but he went blundering on like a man; and directly we rose to leave the dining-room Janie made her escape. I saw her running up the staircase at the end of the hall, regardless of the hurt foot; and then I turned to Eleanor, who was slowly moving across on Barbara's arm.

The gentlemen followed us almost immediately, not caring to sit over their wine, and presently there was the usual outcry for Janie. Gregory had been talking about the disputed architecture of a church in the east of Cornwall which was half a ruin, and wanted to illustrate his argument by showing us certain photographs, which it seemed were in the inner drawer of a locked escritoire in his study. There were private papers in the drawers, and he did not care to send a servant with the key, nor to disturb himself from the comfortable fireside-nook in which he was settled. Janie ran all the errands and knew where everything was, and Janie must fetch the pictures. Then Eleanor was waiting also for the game of chess which was her nightly recreation, and Janie was always her antagonist. I could not offer myself as a substitute, for I barely knew the moves; and for neither of these needs did the parents seem to think of turning to Barbara. She was sitting with that same abstracted look on her face which I had noticed in the dining-room; but on Eleanor fretfully remarking for the third time on Janie's continued absence, Dick Sudeleigh asked if she would accept his challenge. It was long since he had played, he said, but he would make the attempt, provided Barbara would look on and give him the benefit of her advice. Barbara said carelessly

that her advice was not worth having, and evidently took little interest in the match; for as the game was drawing to a crisis, and Dick's king came for the first time under check, she rose and began to wander about the room; then turning to her father said, as if by a sudden impulse, "Give me the keys, Dad, and I will fetch your photographs. Janie will be ages yet."

Gregory was still fuming and tapping the small bunch impatiently on the arm of his chair; he now surrendered it at her offer, impressing on her the particular right-hand drawer which she must open, and that she must be careful about closing and re-locking the bureau. I can see her as she paused to listen to the instructions, with the key-ring threaded on one slender finger, her pretty face and figure,—so young, so brilliant, so well-beloved. And then she went swiftly out, closing the drawing-room door upon us four.

The time must then have been about nine o'clock, perhaps a little later; we could not afterwards fix it with any certainty; we had dined at half-past seven, but had lingered rather over the meal. The first game of chess resulted in a victory for Eleanor, but she was defeated in the second; so a third was undertaken and hard fought to a lingering conclusion; but still Barbara had not returned, and Janie did not appear. Gregory had dropped into a doze in his corner oblivious of the Cornish church, when Eleanor looked up with one of her few remaining pieces poised in cogitation of a critical move, and said sharply: "Where are the girls? Susan, I should be so much obliged if you would call Barbara. What can she be doing all this time in the study?"

I went, nothing loth, being weary of the monotonous click of my knitting needles and the warm sleepy silence about me, only broken by a word now

and then from the chess-players, who were for the most part silently intent upon their game. I found the passage in darkness, but the study-door was ajar and showed a light within. A hand-lamp burned on the table, the flame blowing wildly in the draught from the outer door into the garden which stood partly open to the night, and half the window-shutter was folded back. Barbara was not there, but Gregory's bureau was still open with his keys hanging in the lock, and a small drawer had been dropped in the middle of the floor with a heap of scattered papers.

There was nothing specially portentous about her absence where first sought, but the earliest chill of mis-giving struck on me then and there with the blank of the empty room and that current of icy air. My first impulse was to close and fasten the door, but then I remembered I might be barring her out into the wintry dark, so I left it as it was, and hastened back to the drawing-room.

Janie was entering it before me, and I remarked in the same instant with Eleanor's exclamation that she had changed her dress. She sat opposite to me at dinner in white as I have said; and she was now wearing a black stuff frock and looking deadly pale. She held up her right hand, round which a handkerchief was fastened, but she seemed to speak with difficulty. "I cut it with the window," she said.

"Dear me, how stupid of you, child! What window? And has this been keeping Barbara away too? Where is she?"

"Barbara!" the girl repeated as if astonished. "I have not seen her; I know nothing about her. Why do you ask?"

The cut was evidently a deep one, and the bandage seemed loose and ineffectual, for the blood was begin-

ning to ooze through it in a crimson stain. We might have heard more particulars of the accident then and there, but I broke in about the open door into the garden, and asked if it were likely Barbara had gone out. No more was thought of Janie's hand after that, or of her changed frock; but the first impression with them all seemed to be astonishment rather than alarm. Dick Sudeleigh looked at his watch. "Five minutes to ten!" he said jumping up. "By Jove, I had no idea it was so late! In the garden? Why, she will catch her death of cold! I will go and fetch her in."

"She can't be in the garden," said Eleanor, and she was on her feet too for all her infirmity. "You know how nervous she has been lately; nothing would induce her to go out by herself at this hour. She must be somewhere in the house." Eleanor had reached the bell by this time and rang it sharply. "Tell Evans to call Miss Barbara," I heard her saying to the servant. "She is up-stairs, and I want her,—here, immediately."

I heard the order given as I followed Gregory out; Dick Sudeleigh had already got his hat. The study was just as I left it; Barbara had not returned. There was alarm as well as irritation in her father's voice as he said: "What can the child have been doing? I told her to be careful with the keys. This is the drawer she was sent to, and here are the photographs," and indeed he picked them up lying beneath it on the floor. "Good God, Susan! Where is she? Why has she left them here?"

Dick had dashed out into the garden, and I heard his voice calling her name. Gregory and I stood on the threshold and peered after him. The darkness was not absolute, as the moon was up; but a thick white mist shrouded the lawn and shrubberies, and we could see nothing plainly but the outline of

the tree-tops against the sky. The cold was piercing, but I never felt it, and I think he did not either. Presently we heard Eleanor behind us. "Oh, Gregory!" she said, and her voice was almost a cry. "She is not in the house; the servants have looked everywhere, and Janie knows nothing. What can have taken her out, and without a word to us?"

There was terror in her face now, and she caught at her husband with a grasp as if his arm alone kept her from falling. He did not answer, for there were footsteps outside on the frozen path, Dick's footsteps returning alone. He was pale too, and his teeth chattered as he spoke. "I have been all round; I can see nothing of her nor make her hear. If she is not indoors we must get lanterns. She may have fainted with the cold."

That was what came next, the search of the garden with lanterns, of the orchard and churchyard, and of the road for some distance either way; but not a trace could be discovered. Barbara, in her pretty evening-dress and her thin slippers, going from one room to another in her father's house, had disappeared as utterly and completely as if the ground had opened and swallowed her up. At first Eleanor would not be persuaded to leave the study, but finally I got a warm shawl round her and helped her back into the drawing-room, and induced her to swallow some wine. Janie was there too, crouched in a corner of the sofa with her face hidden. I thought she seemed more terrified than any of us in those first hours. Eleanor was greatly distressed, but part of her trouble was the scandal that might arise; she considered we had been incautious in giving the alarm at once, and enlisting the servants in the search. She was afraid it would be difficult to explain the matter to them when Barbara came back, not

admitting to herself, poor soul, that Barbara might never return.

No one at the Rectory went to bed through all that dreadful night. When the search was at last abandoned, Dick and Gregory joined us in the drawing-room round the fire which I had kept burning, while the house was lighted in every window, with open doors to the wanderer. We took counsel together,—if that word be not a misnomer in such a maze of bewilderment and conjecture, while our hearts were aching with the anguish of suspense. Gregory looked years older for the passage of those hours when he came in to break their failure to his wife; and on Dick Sudeleigh's young face there was a haggard grayness of despair. Janie saw it, for her eyes went instantly to his; and then instead of the sort of trance of horror which had kept her dumb, she fell to crying and weeping as if her heart would break. She was the only one who had nothing to suggest among our wild guesses; but when Dick said with a groan,— "She has not left us voluntarily; that I will never believe,"—Janie's voice responded with an emphatic, "Oh no, no!"

So the time wore on till the winter dawn might soon be expected to clear away the darkness which added to our difficulty. Our candles were burning in the sockets, and Janie had returned anew from the errand on which Eleanor had sent her again and again through the night,—to see if the fire was alight in Barbara's room, and everything ready for her. The servants were sitting up in the kitchen, beguiling their watch with what gossip and wonderment may be supposed. They had come in from time to time to see if we wanted anything; but Eleanor was impatient of any stir which interfered with her strained listening for sounds from without, for



the light footstep which never came. It was not till nearly seven that Gregory prevailed on her to go and lie down in her room, and he and Janie accompanied her up stairs.

I was left alone with Dick Sudeleigh sitting opposite me, still in the evening-dress which has so strange a look when worn on into the breaking of another day. We were both silent for a while, listening as Eleanor listened, but, alas ! with little of the hope she clung to. He looked up at me at last with those changed eyes full of pain. "Miss Varney," he said, "tell me what you really think. They are not here to be distressed by it."

"I have no thoughts that could be of use ; I feel stunned with the calamity like the rest. Our conjectures seem to beat against a blank wall in which there is no outlet ; but I believe she has not gone voluntarily. That increases the horror of it, while it is our one comfort to keep faith in her."

"To lose that would be to lose all,—to me. She went to the study ; that is proved by Mr. Alleyne's keys."

"Do you think in going into the room she could have surprised some one who was there with the intention of robbery, as my cousin said just now ?"

"No ; for she had time to unlock the bureau and take out the drawer, the errand on which she had been sent. I have been thinking it over since he spoke. My theory would be that some sound at the window alarmed her and made her drop the drawer where we found it ; that she opened first the shutter and then the door."

"But don't you think the impulse of alarm would have been to rush back to us, not to investigate for herself ? You know how timid they say she was ; though to be timid was unlike the Barbara I used to know."

"I never thought her timid, and I have seen her tried by more than one emergency. We had a boating-accident at Filey, and she showed courage and presence of mind quite unusual in such a girl. Janie was always the timid one."

"They seem to have noticed it since her return here ; she did not like going out alone. "It is a safe neighbourhood, I suppose ?"

I did not like to speak out the thought which had crossed me ; could there have been anybody here of whom she was afraid ? But his rejoinder showed it had no place in his mind, and was the baseless conjecture of my ignorance. "It is as safe a neighbourhood as could be. There are no suspicious characters about that I ever heard of ; Ditchborough is too much off the beaten track to attract tramps. Barbara knows everybody in her father's parish and they know her ; and though Mr. Alleyne has not been here very long,—three years, is it not ?—he has been so generous to the people that he could not fail to have won their good-will."

"Gregory would never make an enemy. If he erred at all it would be on the side of over-kindness."

"I see two alternatives. That she has been forced away by some villain ; or that she has wandered off in a sudden insane aberration such as one sometimes hears of. In either case it must be possible to trace her. As soon as it is light I am going to get help. Anything is better than this inaction ; and Mrs. Alleyne's scruples about exposure cannot be regarded now. We know one thing,—she has left the house ; every cranny of it has been searched for her in vain. There are dogs trained to track by the scent ; we could put them on from the study, and they would follow wherever she has passed on foot."

"If she has been forcibly removed, surely it must have been in a carriage; I did not hear one, but that is nothing; we were so secure and at ease we should not have noticed, though wheels on the frozen road and in this country stillness must have sounded plainly. But about the tracking; would scent lie in such a frost? Ah, look at the window; there is a fresh difficulty."

The gray glimmer without was sufficient to show a change of weather; snow had begun to fall, and was already drifting against the pane in heavy flakes. At this moment Gregory came in to summon me up stairs. "Eleanor is very ill," he said. "It is the attack she is subject to, but an aggravated form of it; only Janie is with her,—she will not have the servants. I am sending for the doctor, but I fear little can be done to relieve her."

I went up at once, to find her in such agony as I have seldom (thank God!) had to witness. We did what we could,—Janie and I, for the girl was self-possessed and helpful in this crisis, her grief and panic put aside. Nothing seemed to alleviate the paroxysm, but after a while it quieted down of itself, and she was better when the doctor arrived. He had been told of our trouble, and I think the heavy opiate he ordered was aimed as much at the mental as the physical suffering. He mixed it at the bedside, and when Janie took the glass to administer, he said to her, "You have hurt your hand!"

It was tied up with a bandage of rag, and seemed to have broken out bleeding afresh in the recent strain. Eleanor said feebly, "Let Dr. Carpenter see it," before she lay back on her pillow with closed eyes.

Janie did not resist the direction, but there was an air of unwillingness about her which the doctor noticed,

for he said with a smile, "I will not hurt you." I don't think it was pain she feared, for she did not flinch over the dressing of the wound, though it proved a trying business. The cut was a deep one, torn down through the ball of the thumb into the wrist with jagged gaping edges. Dr. Carpenter gave a low whistle as the bandage was unwound to expose it. "How on earth did you do it?" he exclaimed,—his manners were rather blunt. "You will carry the mark of this to your dying day."

"I cut it with the window," she repeated in a low, faint voice, and the unreadiness of manner was still evident.

"This was surely not cut with glass."

"No, the edge of the casement. I knew it was broken; I ought to have taken care, but I was in a hurry."

"What window?" I asked, for I confess to being curious.

There was a pause, and then she said, reluctantly, as she had spoken all through, "The window of the attic."

I asked no more then, but, as it happened, I was to hear again of the trivial accident later on.

Eleanor dozed and slept the greater part of the day, which seemed to stretch itself out to preternatural length as I sat by her bedside in turn with Janie. People were coming and going below, but not the one so ardently longed for; and all the time the snow fell thickly, a white whirl confusing all the outer prospect, and driven into drifts by the wind. The search was going forward,—we knew that, and knew, alas! that it was fruitless. As soon as it was light inquiry had been made at all the houses in the scattered village, including Coldhope, and Dick Sudeleigh had gone for a detective, as well as to send telegrams to his rela-

tives to stop their journey, which was to have been taken on that day for the wedding on the morrow.

The detective when he came had evidently a prepossession of his own about the case, which was diametrically opposed to ours. He thought we should find the young lady had gone off of her own free will, and not alone; that she was probably safe and well, and would before long communicate with her friends. He had known similar instances, where the relatives were quite as much taken by surprise. He would ask us to observe there had been no evidence of struggle, no outcry; and it appeared that Miss Alleyne herself had unfastened the door, as the servants had secured it as usual for the night. It was also in his opinion evidence of the existence of a confederate, as self-destruction was very improbable, that she had gone without preparation of any kind, without even a wrap from the hall, or any provision of money, as her purse had been found in the pocket of her morning-dress. It was true she was wearing two rings of value,—and here the expert glanced at his notes, which had been made

with great exactness of every detail in dress and appearance—but she would find them difficult to dispose of except in a large town.

It was horrible to hear all these considerations weighed in this dry matter-of-fact way, when we felt assured that such an action, and the motives which would prompt it, would be impossible to Barbara. But our conviction made no difference to this man of experience in crime. He would do all in his power; and if there had been foul play it must certainly be brought to light.

Janie was invaluable that day; but for her there would have been no semblance of order or comfort about the distracted house. It was she who saw to the ordering of everything, and who coaxed Gregory to take the meals prepared for him. He was fast breaking down, now that the immediate need for action was at an end. “How shall I face my congregation on Sunday?” he said. “It is worse, infinitely worse than if the child were lying dead. We could have borne God’s will, hard as it would have been upon us; but this—this is the wrongdoing of man!”

*(To be continued.)*

## SOME THOUGHTS ON SAINT BRUNO.

THE names of the founders of the great monastic orders, Benedict, Francis and Dominic, are not often in our day on the lips of men, even in countries nominally Catholic. It is therefore not singular that the name of Bruno should seldom be heard, for he had none of the qualities of the popular idol; the legend of this saint, though helped in later times by Le Sueur's series of pictures, has never appealed to the imagination of the multitude. The average man is no doubt a hero-worshipper after his own manner, but in his heroes he likes more warmth and colour, more glow of passion and a keener sense of brotherhood, than Bruno at first sight appears to have. Yet he too, the stern, silent man, who lived in the wilds of Chartreuse, and began there without foreseeing it the noble Order of the Carthusians, was a seeker after the divine. And since the goal of the spirit is not in time or place, what matters it where such a life is spent, whether in the desert or in the crowded city?

The lives of saints of the Roman Church should not, we think, be written by members of that Church; writers trained in the Roman tradition are apt to give us touching homilies rather than vivid portraits. In the work of the hagiologist the impartial reader is made to feel that the saint had too much sweetness in him, and too little strength. Sometimes one is tempted to ask whether the whole race of saints were not unwholesome; their biographers make them pose so much, and picture them in an enchanted isle at a distance from human life. To live in

such an atmosphere is not invigorating, though one were forty times a saint. We will keep away from it, and put Bruno upon the solid earth; after all reality is more interesting than any realm of fancy.

No part of the life of Bruno was spent in the glare of day, and the materials for a full biography are not by any means available; even the traditions of his Order have been guarded with a fine and lofty reserve, such as is not always shown by religious bodies. This has certainly not been from any desire to hide an unworthy past, for the Order has an unsullied record. The Carthusians have been in existence for about eight hundred years; they have never sought to be great as preachers or teachers, nor have they coveted power or wealth. In thinking over their history, we ask ourselves if ever another religious body has carried, from century to century, its practices and traditions with so undeviating a faithfulness, with so much modesty and simplicity, and with so much freedom from human frailty. It was no cloistered recluse, but the great opponent of monachism, Voltaire, who declared that the Carthusian Order was the only one that had never needed reforming. It is a thing worth noting that in a world where there is so much change, this Order should for eight centuries have kept closely in touch with its founder.

We will give a bare outline of Bruno's life, without stating our reason for accepting one date rather than another. There are points in his life that are open to controversy, as the man with a fixed theory discovered

some centuries ago ; in discussing such things there is no profit, and it is well to pass them over lightly. Bruno d' Hartenfaust was of noble lineage, and was born at Cologne about the year 1035. He began his education in that city at the school belonging to the church of St. Cunibert ; and afterwards he studied at Rheims, which at that time was famous for its teachers. He was austere in morals from his boyhood, and was a hard student too, for he mastered the best knowledge of his age, especially in philosophy and theology. When Bruno was still a young man, Hermian, canon of Rheims and superintendent of advanced studies in the great schools of the diocese, retired to the cloister, and Bruno was appointed to succeed him. Among the students destined to distinction who in this way came under his influence was Otho, made Pope in 1088 and known as Urban the Second. It was from Gervais, Archbishop of Rheims, that Bruno received the appointment. Gervais died in 1067, and was succeeded by Manasses, who by simoniacal methods obtained the archbishopric. Manasses was a tyrannical prelate, and a man of loose life, who greatly scandalised Bruno and his brother canons. It is possible that the quarrels and disorder caused by Manasses had something to do with Bruno's final determination to retire from the world, but this is not in the least certain ; he was a born solitary, and the real constraining influence was from within.

Bruno did not hesitate to condemn the evil life of Manasses, and at a Council held at Autun in 1077, he and two other canons openly accused the Archbishop, who had been summoned to appear there before the Papal Legate. Manasses kept away from the Council, and was suspended by the Legate ; but with his wonted effrontery he defied the rulers of the

Church, and for a time continued in his office. The Legate, it is said, was quick to do justice to the lofty character and great abilities of Bruno, whom he recommended warmly to the Pope. But in the meantime Bruno and the other canons who had accused Manasses were driven from their homes by the minions of the Archbishop ; their possessions were seized by the despotic prelate and their prebends were sold. The hunted canons took refuge in the castle of the Count de Ronci, where they remained until the following year. And now at length the indignation of the populace did what the rulers of the Church could not do, for in 1079 the people of Rheims drove the unworthy Archbishop out of their city ; he retired to the court of the King of Germany, and died there outside the pale of the Church. The vacant see might probably have been secured by Bruno, if he had wished for it ; but he desired nothing but to seek perfection in the contemplative life.

It is according to the Carthusian tradition that Bruno, shortly after these events, was the witness of a miracle ; this was nothing less than the resurrection of Raymond, a learned doctor of Paris, over whose body the funeral service was being read in the church of Notre Dame. In the middle of the service, says the legend, Raymond rose upon the bier and called out in terrifying tones, "I am justly accused," again, "I am judged," and again, "I am condemned." The tradition continues that Bruno was so profoundly impressed by this occurrence, that he determined to spend the rest of his life in solitude, that he might by prayer and penance bring peace to his soul. It was at one period widely believed, for it found a place in the Roman breviary, but it has not even that substratum of fact which the severest critic can discover in some alleged miracles of the



Middle Ages ; for a long time indeed the best ecclesiastical writers have rejected it, and Urban the Eighth wisely expunged it from the breviary. In a letter of which the text has been preserved, Bruno himself, writing to his friend Ralph le Vert, at that time Church-provost and subsequently Archbishop of Rheims, suggests a far simpler explanation of the whole matter ; his own heart's longings were more powerful than the doctor and the miracle. In his solitude he recalls conversations in the old days with his friend, and he goes on : " Do you remember that day when the three of us, you and I with Fulcius le Borgne, walked in a garden near the house where I lived ? After discoursing of the transitoriness of earthly pleasures and possessions compared with the duration of celestial joys, we were so overcome with fervour that we pledged ourselves to the Holy Spirit to leave these perishable things, and to take the monastic habit, the better to merit those things which are eternal. Nor should we have delayed to execute our plan but for the voyage which Fulcius made just then to Rome."

It was in 1084 that Bruno at last carried out the dream of his life. After living for a time in retreat at Saisse-Fontaine, he with six companions, all filled with the desire for the eremetical life, went for counsel and direction to Robert, Abbot of Molesme, who fourteen years later founded the Order of Cistercians. In accordance with the Abbot's advice, they sought Hugh, Bishop of Grenoble, whom they prayed to bestow upon them some secluded spot within his diocese, where they might live undisturbed and apart from the world. The Bishop, a noble prelate and a saintly man, accompanied them to the wilds of Chartreuse, and gave them that spot of ground which became the site of the

first religious house of the Carthusians. Here they built an oratory, with a separate cell for each monk, like the old lauras of Egypt in the first fervour of Christian monasticism. They took the three usual vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and added four others of still greater severity, borrowed, as their Prior said, " like a purifying elixir from the life of the ancients ;" to wear the hair shirt and to live in silence, to have their dwelling in solitude, and to abstain from the flesh of animals. They cultivated the soil and occupied themselves in other ways, desiring above all things to copy manuscripts and to illuminate the sacred writings with loving care. The life of the early Carthusians is depicted by two contemporaries, first by Peter the Venerable, that delightful man and good friend to Abelard ; and by Guibert, Abbot of Nogent, a learned and elegant Latin writer of those days. Neither of them could have known the founder of the Carthusians, but both must have been acquainted with monks of this Order who were novices in the lifetime of Bruno. The description of Peter the Venerable is well known : he says the clothing of the monks was coarse and scanty ; far from regretting their poverty, they found it good, and had marked around their oratory an enclosure beyond which they would not accept a foot of earth, whatever might be offered to them. Lest they should be compelled to enlarge their oratory, they fixed the number of their monks at thirteen, including the Prior ; there were also a certain number of lay-brothers, and a few menial servants. Their flocks were composed of sheep and oxen, goats and asses. They never ate flesh, not relaxing this rule even in case of illness ; on Tuesdays and Saturdays they ate nothing but vegetables, while on Mondays,

Thursdays and Fridays they ate only brown bread and drank water. They took food but once a day, except on Sundays, solemn festivals, and during the octaves of Easter, Christmas and Whitsuntide; and they said mass only on Sundays and feast-days. The first six companions of Bruno were Landwin, who succeeded him in the priorship of the Grande Chartreuse; Stephen du Bourg and Stephen de Die, both canons of St. Rufus; Hugh, who acted as chaplain; and two laymen named Andrew and Guérin.

The description of Guibert is not so widely known, and we shall do well to follow that writer more closely. "Their church," he says, "is built near the summit of the mountain. They have a fairly large cloister, but they do not live together as other monks do. Round this cloister each of the monks has his own cell, where he works, sleeps and takes his meals. On Sunday they receive from the steward vegetables and bread for the week; they are not allowed to cook any food except vegetables. Water for drinking and other purposes is conveyed into each cell from a spring by means of pipes. On Sundays and solemn festivals they eat cheese and fish, when these are given to them by the benevolent; but they do not buy them. Offerings of gold and silver and ornaments for their church they alike refuse to accept; their only piece of plate is a chalice. They do not at the usual hours assemble together in the church; unless I am mistaken it is on Sundays and feast-days that they hear mass. Little talk is heard among them, for when one monk wishes to say something to another, he does it by signs. When they drink wine it is so diluted that it is almost tasteless, and is little better than water. As for their costume, they wear a hair-shirt next the skin, and the rest of their clothing is

scanty enough . . . . . Yet, poor as they are, they have a fine library."

There is in Rome a statue which has helped to fix the image of Bruno in many a mind; modesty and reserve speak in the whole figure, but especially in the face, so calm, yet with a rapture of contemplation; it is a soul imprisoned in flesh, but the flesh at length has yielded obedience to the spiritual law. You hardly notice that he has the tonsure and that his features are singularly delicate and refined, for you are conscious only of the soul's triumph in that impressive and touching figure. Such we may believe was Bruno to the outward eye; does it not also tell us the story of his inner life? This eremite among the wastes of Chartreuse was no madman or visionary, but a man of fine intellect, gentle and gracious, who in the way that seemed best and with a consuming ardour sought the goal of the spirit. Such imperial natures do not seek in vain. Nor need we trouble ourselves greatly over the asceticism of the picture; the hair-shirt and the fasting, the silence and gloomy solitude. Man in his struggles towards the mountain-heights has employed strange machinery, and he still does so, though we who live among it perhaps fail to see its oddity. If he reach the heights, what matter the accidents of the journey? We do not indeed forget that millions of well-disposed but weak-minded pilgrims, such for instance as the Flagellants, have spent their lives in trifling by the way, and have never come into the bracing air at all. But we shall not occupy ourselves with that aspect of asceticism, for Bruno was not of these. He is a type, the best known to us, of the recluse who finds in the life of contemplation mental calm and spiritual joy. Never did hermit seek perfection with a loftier zeal or with a purer heart.

Bruno would no doubt have preferred to end his days at Chartreuse, but this was not to be. In 1089, or the following year, he went to Rome, at the request of Pope Urban, taking his monks with him. It was a time of sore trial for Urban, and it was natural that he should seek help from the director of his youth. The monks were not long in returning to Chartreuse, and by desire of Bruno they chose Landwin for their second Prior. Bruno remained in Rome, yet in spite of the favour of the Pope, he found no satisfaction in the life he had to lead there. He was solicited by the people of Calabria to consent to his election as Archbishop of Reggio, and Urban pressed him to accede, but without success; here was the spectacle of an ecclesiastic who in very truth did not wish to be a bishop. He besought the Pope with tears to be allowed to depart to his solitude; and though Urban could not bring himself to allow Bruno to leave Italy, he permitted him after a while to retire into the wastes of Calabria. Here, in the diocese of Squillace, he erected an oratory in 1090, and through the liberality of Roger, Prince of Sicily and Count of Calabria, was soon enabled to found the monastery of La Torre, where he lived for the rest of his days. His death took place on the 6th of October, 1101, at which time he was probably something more than sixty-five years of age.

He was not canonised until 1623, more than five hundred years after his death, by which time the Carthusians had become a powerful body, though they have never been one of the largest. But for this rather late growth of his Order, it is not likely that Bruno would have figured in the calendar at all. The year 1623 is not invariably accepted; half the notices of Bruno, in English and foreign works

of reference, stating that he was canonised in 1514. This discrepancy is explained by the fact that in 1514 Leo the Tenth gave the Carthusians his sanction to make use of a special office in honour of their founder; this was regarded as equivalent to the act of beatification, but he was not actually canonised until 1623, during the pontificate of Gregory the Fifteenth. The delay is somewhat singular, especially when we remember that two at least of Bruno's friends, both of whom we have had occasion to name, were canonised long before him; Hugh, Bishop of Grenoble, as early as 1134, two years after his death, and Robert, Abbot of Molesme, in 1243. To what must this delay be attributed? Bruno was not a typical son of the Middle Ages, like Becket or Thomas Aquinas, for he shared neither the popular love of miracles, nor the passion for subtle disquisition which was peculiar to the men trained in the atmosphere of scholasticism. The schoolman in his interpretations of Scripture forestalled the modern German critic of the Shakesperean drama, for he felt its poetry all too little, and saw many things in it which were not there. Bruno in spirit was nearer to his great contemporary Anselm; both were free from pseudo-subtlety and had great practical sense, though on the one hand Anselm is not a type of the contemplative mind, nor on the other hand does it appear that Bruno had the intellectual equipment of Anselm. It is singular to recall in this place that according to at least one of his biographers, Bruno studied at the Abbey of Bec in Normandy, made famous by Lanfranc and Anselm. It is a pretty story which one may hope to be true, but it is not authenticated. Some of Bruno's writings have come down to us, though they have not, like Anselm's, helped to make history. These consist of com-

mentaries on the Psalms, the Epistle to the Romans, and other portions of Scripture, and are written in choicer Latin than was usual with the ecclesiastical authors of that century.

The way in which the disciples of Bruno came by their name, is one of the things everybody is supposed to know, though the University Examiner tells a different story. Carthusian, says Littré, is from *Catursiani Montes*, the Latin name of the mountains where Bruno and his first followers erected their oratory; or from *Caturisium*, the Latin name for the neighbouring village of Chatrousse, within the diocese of Grenoble in Dauphiné. It was in 1137 that the first monastery was built at Chartreuse, at some distance from the humble oratory erected by Bruno in 1084. This monastery, as well as those built to replace it in later times (several of which have been destroyed by fire), has been known as La Grande Chartreuse, and has always been recognised by Carthusians as the mother-house of their Order. Here Guigo, the fifth Prior, about thirty years after the death of Bruno, wrote out the ordinances of the Grande Chartreuse, which he communicated to other religious houses of the Order; for Bruno and his companions, and their immediate successors, had been without a written rule. The work of Guigo was done in the spirit of the founder, and would no doubt have been acceptable to him. The Carthusian of to-day lives under a different rule, for a monastic order that lives at all cannot be for ever proof against change; it is pleasant to know that in the matter of food and dress he fares better than the first disciples of Bruno. Yet the modern Carthusian, as he meditates upon the life of his Founder, need not feel that he is in any way false to the genius of Bruno's teaching; and

he may well feel a generous pride as he remembers that his Order has never stood in need of reform.

For those whose education has not put them in touch with Catholic tradition it is almost impossible to realise such a story as Bruno's, or to feel at all the attraction of the monastic life. Lord Brougham had perhaps an honest desire to help us, but his remark that the monastic life of the Middle Ages was like modern club-life, does not carry us far; he might as well have said that Hebrew and trigonometry have a great deal in common. In making this inapt comparison he could not have been thinking of the Carthusians, who are eremites; he had surely in mind those monks who are cœnobites, and live in community. The motives which constrain men to enter upon the monastic career no doubt vary greatly, but the essence of monasticism is the essence of Christianity, and that is purity.

"Nature cares nothing for chastity," says Renan; how can Nature, who cares for nothing, care for a moral idea? If indeed what the man of science calls Nature could be accepted as the whole sum of things, there would be no basis for morality at all. This we remember was not Matthew Arnold's view, for in reply to Renan he said that unchastity is against Nature, which we may place beside the following, from a distinguished living writer: "Bad morality is necessarily bad art, for art is human, but immorality inhuman." This is the acme of false reasoning. Virtue is human, vice and bad art are human, though the latter are things to be avoided. But why are they to be avoided? Can any of the moralists who exclude deity give a satisfying reason why we should love virtue and hate its opposite? Not one of them all, from the first of the Asiatic to the last of the European, has

been able to show that the voluptuary has not as good a case as the saint. How then does the accurate thinker meet the case? He tells us that man needs a theological idea to complete the circle of his thought; and in view of this it is not singular that the theologian comes to speak of sanctity as an idea in the supernatural order. Of such a life as Bruno's we may say that it is spent in quest of this supernatural idea.

There is a different view of the question, and we will briefly state it. Writers of the school of Gibbon say that the morbid longing for an existence in the heavenly Jerusalem is at the bottom of the whole matter; that the saint makes a fine art of selfishness, and neglects social duties in order that he may admire the texture of his own mind, and dream of an enervated life beyond the grave. Now such is the constitution of the human mind that the hermit cannot, without drifting into lunacy, spend his days in dreaming of the New Jerusalem; a future life may be part of his scheme of things, but not in the way Gibbon would put it. The truth is that all the writers of that school, who for nearly two centuries have poured scorn upon the saints and martyrs of the Christian Church, have a common family likeness; the best of them are men of great distinction and intelligence, but of shallow nature. If you wish to see the truth about Bruno, you must in the first place accept him on his own terms and see with his own eyes, after which you will be free to form a judgment; but is it conceivable that any one who approached Bruno in this way would end his summing up of such a character with the note of condemnation?

But there is a still greater difficulty in the way of an Englishman who wishes to understand such a character as Bruno. For nearly four centuries

England and Rome have spent much time in abusing one another, and the Englishman has still the fear that the Pope secretly desires to spirit him away to a prison of the Inquisition. This feeling runs through that portion of our literature which is most distinctively English, from the writers of the sixteenth century to Macaulay and Froude. They nearly all appear to share the opinion of Mark Pattison, that Calvin saved Europe from moral ruin, and in their manner of expressing it they seldom avoid extravagance. Calvin did well if he did so, yet it is a pity he should have added a new gloom to man's life. We can sympathise with the poet who gives all the wealth of his praise to Saint Bruno or Saint Charles Borromeo; but the poet who could bring sweet sounds from his lyre in praise of Calvin, would be an anomaly. We love the saints who bring us into an atmosphere where dogma loses its hardness, where the scaffoldings of religion seem to fall away because the spiritual temple is complete. Why need we ask whether such men hail from Rome or elsewhere?

If in our day a student of science were to withdraw for a quarter of a century from the throng of men, that he might attempt to wrest from Nature another of her mighty secrets, should we not all admire such devotion, especially if he succeeded in his quest? Whether or not, we might still justly admire the deed, and admit that science as well as religion requires of her votaries infinite toil, patience, and self-denial. Why withhold from the religious solitary the admiration we should willingly give to the man of science? Was the inward perfection for which Bruno struggled not as real as the law of gravitation? It was far more real than any natural law, since what we call so to-day will by and by



be superseded. Such sanctity as Bruno's on the other hand is not affected by the progressive thought of humanity, but may be said to stand for the absolute.

Approaching Bruno then with that reasonable sympathy which we owe to all men, what do we see? A man of ripe experience of the world, fifty years old or thereabouts, well-born, who has had the best education his century could give him; of refined tastes and austere morals, with a strong will and a vigorous mind, holding already an enviable position in the Church, and to whom some of its greatest prizes are open if he will but put forth his hand; this man yet finds in the life of the world no satisfying peace, for he is one of those rare souls who are born to a great perfection. An inward voice is ever calling him to this along a road of self-denial and travail of spirit, with few resting places for the weary feet; and at the end of it the contemplative mind, the pure heart and soul. Does the prize seem small after such a journey? Perhaps so, to him who has never travelled the road. How many a prudent friend must have counselled him to choose an easier path, to remain in the world, and in a career of honourable ambition to deaden this longing for an impossible perfection. But such counsels did not weigh with him, and he went to the desert in order that the law of the spirit might prevail.

He was tormented with none of our intellectual hesitations, our paralysing doubts. The Bible was for him the living Word of God, and in it, with some necessary help from the Church and tradition, was unfolded the whole mystery of man's nature. Many of his interpretations were doubtless far-fetched, as we can see by what has come down to us; but such was the tendency of the age.

He is interesting, however, not as a professor of exegesis, but as a great character. And what an advantage it is to a man of noble character to be born in such an atmosphere, and to be kept from the blight of doubt. He had never seen cause to change a religious opinion, and thus was secured to him that singleness of vision which, as the Master said, maketh "the whole body full of light." He did not indeed seek in the Bible for a set of universal truths which might serve as a complete philosophy for mankind; he sought there the food his temperament required, and his temperament was that of the religious solitary.

We have mentioned more than one modern objection to such a life as Bruno's; but a really characteristic criticism of our age we have not noticed. The man of science has said that such a life is contrary to Nature; the literary man and the artist have told us that Bruno and his compeers took a narrow and unwise view of life, fatal to the love of beauty and to freedom of thought; while a subtle Italian reformer has said that the preachers of resignation are mostly responsible for the slowness of the world's progress, since they have made submission a virtue, where resistance might have gained freedom. There are other objections, but we will stop here. Now first as to the man of science: such a life as Bruno's, he says, is contrary to Nature; well, all science, civilisation, art, literature, whatever is done by man as thinker, artist, apostle of order, is contrary to Nature. Is not this one of the phrases that help to hide vacancy of thought? With regard to the objection of the artist and the literary man, it really means that men have often the limitations which might be expected from their calling; but in the case of Bruno it is not in any large sense applicable.

The founder of the Carthusians had a passion for humane letters and a keen sense of the beautiful in Nature ; and only those who do not know his life will say that he unworthily stifled any such liberalising instincts. And as to the charge of the Italian reformer, it is true that the saints have not shown a genius for conspiracy, but they are not therefore responsible for the tyranny of rulers. A sufficient answer is to be found in the fact that the noblest revolution recorded in history was the work of men like Bruno, filled through and through with the longing for an inward perfection.

But all this has the ring of controversy, and not in such a spirit could we becomingly take leave of Bruno. To do justice to such a character, we must fix our minds upon the root-idea of his system, and this we have seen is purity. As Bruno conceived it, purity is an idea in the supernatural order. He may have spurned the body overmuch ; but great things are costly, and for such a result the price was not too heavy. Ascetical practices, monastic orders, and the rest,—these are so much scaffolding ; it is the idea alone which is eternal. And by virtue of this idea never again, unless wisdom and nobleness disappear from the earth, will men openly return to the worship of heathen gods. Nor need we fear that it is opposed to liberal thinking and to a wide outlook upon life ; it is the man with a small number of thoughts working in a restricted area, who tells us this idea is fatal to science, art, or literature, or to a generous activity in any worldly calling. In the world of mind a true idea is fatal to nothing, except to false ideas.

We have already quoted from a

letter of Bruno's to Ralph le Vert,—a delightful letter, affectionate, graceful, winning ; and we will give another passage from it, which will show a side of Bruno's nature of which we have perhaps said too little. He is writing from his new retreat at La Torre, and he says to his friend : “ I live in a wild spot on the borders of Calabria, at some distance from the dwellings of men. How shall I tell you of the beauty of the place, and of the freshness of the air which we breathe here ? Imagine a large and pleasant plain, stretching out between mountains into the distance, with meadows ever-green and pasture-lands always blowing. . . . The eye may wander over charming gardens, with trees of every kind, laden with the most tempting fruits. But why do I speak so much of these pleasures of our solitude ? The wise man should find here other pleasures, sweeter and higher, because they are divine. Yet one's spirit, worn out by meditation and constant discipline, may well find an innocent recreation in the prospect of this lovely country ; for a bow that is always bent loses its strength.”

This fine passage surely shows that Bruno had genuine poetical feeling. But upon this we will not dwell, for it is as the type of the religious solitary that we have pictured him. That indeed is his true distinction, and we do not wish to confuse such an impression. As we think of him, there come to the lips words which might serve as the epitaph of this beautiful spirit, oft-quoted words of Augustine's which to Bruno must have been familiar : “ Thou hast made us for Thyself, oh Lord, and our heart is restless till it finds rest in Thee.”

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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## A BRIDE ELECT.

### CHAPTER IV.

THE short afternoon of that dreadful day had begun to darken. I was standing in the hall with Gregory, who, I think, had given up all hope by that time. He had found a little scarf which was Barbara's, and he was folding it together on the table with a lingering touch for the insensate thing still warm as it were from her use; it made my heart ache with sympathy to watch him. At that moment the outer door opened quickly, and I turned to see,—not Dick whom we expected, but a stranger coming in without knocking or announcement, like one who was familiar. He came up to Gregory and put a hand on his shoulder. "My dear fellow," he said, "I am grieved beyond measure to hear of this."

He was a tall, slight man wearing a riding-coat and high boots, and with some of the falling snow still unmelted on his shoulders. He had removed his hat on entering, and as he stood bareheaded I thought his face one of the most attractive I had ever seen. His hair was gray, it is true, but no grayer than that of many men not past their prime, while his eyebrows were still black and delicately pencilled. I noticed the hair was worn rather longer than is the modern fashion, and swept away in a thick

wave from the high forehead. His features generally would have been called fine, but the charm of the face lay in the eyes,—brown and soft, what the French call *yeux veloutés*, and now that they were fixed on Gregory dark and moist with what in a woman would have been tears. Was this Redworth of Coldhope, the man against whom Eleanor was prejudiced? I seldom shared Eleanor's prejudices, and did not feel moved to do so here.

"I wish I had been on the spot to help you," he went on. "I hear you sent to my house this morning. I am but just returned, and have had hard work to get through the drifts. I am at your service,—I and all that I have; you have only to command me. Tell me what you are doing, what explanation is thought probable?"

Gregory took the hand and wrung it,—a slender olive hand which his large grasp seemed wholly to enclose, but he could not for the moment answer in words. "Come in and sit down," he said after the first choked pause; and then, turning to me, "My cousin Miss Varney,—Mr. Redworth."

I was standing in the shadow, and I do not think Mr. Redworth had noticed me; but as I came forward on the introduction he positively started. "Great Heavens," he exclaimed, "what a likeness!"

I suppose the twilight disguised all the vast difference that must exist between an old woman and a young one, and thus showed to advantage the similarity in height and general outline. "Yes,—yes," said Gregory, "I always saw it. Barbara was another Susan. This is a terrible business, Redworth, a terrible business. It has half killed my poor Eleanor, and I feel the blow has gone home to me also."

I led the way into the morning-room, where the maid had set out a neglected tea-tray and lighted the lamp. The two men stood on the hearth, Mr. Redworth's soft dark eyes dwelling on Gregory with an affectionate concern which warmed my heart to him. The rays of the hanging lamp fell full upon him, and I could see he was an older man than I had at first imagined. Clear as his skin was in tint and showing colour on the cheek, it was lined with innumerable fine wrinkles round the corners of the eyes and mouth; and there were deep upright furrows between the eyebrows, hinting that the expression of the handsome face was occasionally marred by a frown.

"I must apologise to Miss Varney for my costume," he said, glancing down at it; "but I hurried here at once without waiting to change." Then he turned to Gregory, and was absorbed in his account of our calamity, and of the hitherto unsuccessful search. I will not repeat this, for it embraced only what I have written here. Mr. Redworth put a shrewd question or two, one of which had the effect of opening my mind to a new and unwelcome idea. "You say it was about an hour from the time you sent your daughter on the errand, till she was found to be missing?"

"An hour, as nearly as we can calculate."

"A great deal can happen in an hour, and of course the study is far

away from the occupied rooms. Were all the other members of the household accounted for during that time? Did the officer hint at suspicion of any one under your roof?"

Gregory spoke of our occupations in the drawing-room; that Janie had been up-stairs and the servants in the kitchen, saying rather indignantly that no suspicion could attach to any of them, as there was complete absence of motive. Mr. Redworth heard him out without rejoinder, but stood thoughtfully stroking his shaven upper lip with his forefinger, an action which seemed habitual. I wonder if he had the power of silently impressing others with his own thought, for it came to me as clearly as outward speech—Janie was absent! Janie had a motive for wishing Barbara out of the way! I was horror-stricken at myself for admitting the voice, and strove to shut the ears of my soul to it; but despite my horror the idea had taken shape.

In the inward agitation of this passage I lost the thread of what they were saying, and looked up to find Mr. Redworth's eyes considering me attentively, just as if he were cognisant of what had passed in my mind. He put his hand on Gregory's shoulder. "Once for all, Alleyne, I don't believe in the expert's theory. Barbara could have had no lover unknown to you. The one thing of which I could be certain in this dark perplexity,"—and here his voice broke with a sudden tremor—"is her complete innocence of intention and act. God bless her,—the God we both believe in though we worship Him variously—God bless her wherever she is!"

This was spoken with strong feeling, and the father turned away covering his face. If this man had not won my heart before, it would have gone out wholly to him now. Nothing touches us in our times of sorrow like a word of tender appreciation of those we

mourn. The silver-crowned head shone before me in the blur of quick-rising tears, as if with the halo of a saint. But I wiped them away in time to see clearly a change of expression, another wordless interlude, in which the idea was once more quick, stirring blindly within me.

The door opened, and Dick Sudeleigh and Janie entered together; I saw Mr. Redworth's brown eyes, which had been the instant before so mournfully tender, flash out now with a sudden gleam of vindictive dislike, though the expression changed instantly, and he greeted them with calm courtesy. It was not only this which struck me, but Janie's face when she saw him. She looked frightened and disturbed, barely touching the hand he offered her, and taking an early opportunity to escape from the room.

He did not stay long after this, remaining only briefly to detail the plan he had formed for searching the woods and park so soon as the snow had cleared away. He seemed friendly with Dick, and Dick with him; if a thought of rivalry had ever existed between them it might well be extinguished now in a common sorrow. It was easy of belief that to a man of his power of mind and fertility of resource, the desire for our dear girl's young companionship had been only a passing weakness, dead and vanished as the leaves of that autumn which had seen it arise.

I come now to so strange a part of my narrative,—to a circumstance so inexplicable, except by theories and assumptions for which I have entertained a lifelong aversion, that I pause, pen in hand, hesitating to write it here. But the history of the time would be incomplete without it, and I must be faithful in giving the entire detail to judgment other than my own.

Eleanor was well enough by the evening to sit up; and on the Satur-

day, though still suffering, she descended at her usual hour to the morning-room, whither any tidings would at once be brought. She felt too restless and wretched, she said, to remain up stairs through the bitter passage of this day which had been so differently anticipated. This was the wedding-day; the day of which our Barbara had said to me, as we stood together in the dressing-closet and she put back the cover over her bridal gown, "You will see me then in all my splendour."

Poor Dick was with us for a while after breakfast; but he could hardly bear to speak to any one, and went off again to join in the search which was still on foot far and wide through the snow-covered country. We others were all together with Eleanor,—Gregory, Janie and I,—and the hour was about noon, when the door burst open and Mary the parlour-maid rushed in, excited beyond all regard for her usually decorous manners. "Oh, sir — oh, ma'am," she gasped, "Miss Barbara has come back! She is in the drawing-room, all ready in her wedding-dress, and Mr. Sudeleigh away!"

Gregory was on his feet in an instant, and I was rushing after him when a second thought made me look back for Eleanor. She had attempted to rise with the help of Janie's arm, but sank back again, waving me away. "Go," she said, "and bring my child to me."

The drawing-room was on the opposite side of the hall and was entered by two doors, having originally been divided. I followed Gregory in at the nearest, and was behind him only by those arrested seconds. What was it that we saw? To all appearance it was Barbara, in her trailing white gown and with the lace veil covering her head, but moving away from us at the lower end of the room without notice, and passing out at the further door. Her father stood arrested.



"Barbara!" he cried to her hoarsely, "Barbara!" but the figure did not pause.

As it disappeared through the doorway I darted back into the hall, and there it was already half-way up the stairs, though moving with no appearance of haste. I have been asked since whether it floated or walked; I can only say I saw nothing different from natural movement, except the rapidity with which that space had been traversed while out of view. I would have called to her also, but my voice seemed frozen in my throat. I gained the foot of the stairs in time to see the figure make a slight deliberate pause on the first landing, and then pass into the dressing-closet which opened from it on the left and had no other exit. Gregory was with me by that time, and we both followed close on the disappearance of the last folds of the white train. The door when we came to it was shut, though I remembered after that I had neither heard it close nor open. We opened it on the instant, and, as will have been foreseen, the room was empty.

It held no furniture which could have served the purpose of concealment had she been hiding from us. The room looked as I had seen it last, with one notable difference; the wedding-dress and veil had been dragged from the bed where it was spread out, and lay dropped in a heap at our feet just within the door.

No words of mine can adequately describe the shock of this strange scene, nor the revulsion of feeling from that moment of joyful certainty. Gregory, the servant, and I were the three who witnessed what I must call the apparition; Janie had stumbled and fallen forward on the floor in a dead faint in attempting to follow us, and was brought round after a long time and with much difficulty. Mary, the maid, was terribly frightened when she heard the sequel; she cried bitterly

and begged to be sent home to her mother; she dared not stay in the house, she said, another hour. Her story was that she had gone into the drawing-room as usual to mend the fires, and noticed nothing till she turned away from the second grate,— "When there was Miss Barbara in her wedding-dress, standing looking out of the front window"; she "fairly screeched out" on seeing this, being so astonished, though she did not feel alarm, when the young lady turned and looked at her, making "a sort of beckon with her hand at the door," as if signing to her to go and fetch the others. She understood and acted on it at once, "not thinking till afterwards it wasn't natural for a lady to sign in that way with her hand and not to speak." She had seen Barbara's face plainly through the veil, and "would have known her anywhere"; she looked quite natural, only rather grave and sad.

Neither Gregory nor I had seen the face, except as the figure turned sideways in passing into the dressing-closet, and then the folds of lace hung too closely over it for any real recognition. When he entered the room, —before me, be it remembered—the figure was turned away from him just as I saw it, moving slowly in the direction of the further door and taking no notice of his appeal. I was surprised by the impression the appearance made on him; he would not admit that we could have been hallucinated by expectation arising from the girl's outcry. Clergyman though he was, man of sense and education as I had always thought him, to him that vision of ours was Barbara herself; a sign as sure as the writing on the wall that she was no longer to be numbered in this living world. Even in after times he never spoke of it without reverence and awe. That it should fire the young lover's imagination was more natural; Dick broke down altogether when he

heard what we had seen. "Why not to me,—why not to me?" was his cry. "If I had been there I would have neld her back; living or dead, she should not have left us without a word. My sweet girl, who kept tryst in her wedding-dress at her wedding-hour; why was it that an ignorant servant saw her, and not I?"

Another person deeply interested and eager for detail was Mr. Redworth. I do not know whether Gregory would have chosen to mention the occurrence outside our own family; but Mary had not been reticent about her fright, and the story of Barbara's appearance spread like wildfire through the village till it reached Coldhope. Mr. Redworth came down on Sunday morning to the hushed house, which had heard the church-bells without notice perhaps for the first time since it rose under the shadow of the gray tower. A stranger filled Gregory's pulpit, and he was shut in his study saying he would not be disturbed. I think it was on learning this that Mr. Redworth asked for me. He was very courteous in apologising for the intrusion, and apparently sincere in the concern he expressed. He had heard that Barbara had been seen at the Rectory; if there was any foundation for the report, would I tell him what really had taken place? He understood I had been a witness of the appearance, whatever it was. "Forgive me," he said, "for pressing a question that may be painful. You think of me as a stranger, without right to ask. I will make a confession, Miss Varney; I loved her, and I love her still."

I do not think it was in woman's nature, certainly not in mine, to refuse such a plea, even if the face and voice had been many degrees less persuasive. As it was, I told him all in exact detail as I have written it here, ending with Gregory's fixed impression that the appearance was a token of

death. He listened to me very attentively with no evidence of incredulity, questioning closely on certain points; it may have been only my fancy that his cheek grew paler during the recital. I ventured in the pause which followed to ask his opinion; to find he shared mine that it had been some hallucination of our senses would, I confess, have comforted and reassured me.

"If Mr. Alleyne had studied the subject," he said, "even as superficially as I have done, he would not necessarily assume such an appearance to be a sign of death. It is one of the mysteries of this ill-understood branch of natural science, that ghosts of the living are as well authenticated as ghosts of the dead, and I believe a great deal more frequently seen. Some people have greater power than others to project a thought-body,—a more marked individuality it may be. Let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that Barbara has been torn from her home, and is detained somewhere an unwilling prisoner. What would be more likely than for her mind to dwell on the scenes she has left, picturing herself among them at the hour fixed for her marriage, even in association with the dress she would have worn? Some philosophers hold that our thoughts are in a degree creative and have substance. You see the explanation? First the maid-servant becomes clairvoyant; then you and Mr. Alleyne follow her, not to Barbara's departed spirit, but simply to her embodied thought. You shake your head, and think me far-fetched? So be it. There can be no absolute proof that I am right and you are wrong. We may both be wrong, and the truth wide of any mark our intellects can touch,—as yet. Your mind and mine are only in the first stages of their growth. I believe in a ripening process continued into a more emancipated state; do not you?"

One of the strange things about

this strange man was that his wild talk had a way of seeming reasonable as it fell from his lips. It was only afterwards, when I began to measure it against ordinary standards of opinion, that I realised the full divergence from what passes current as common-sense. He had risen to stand on the hearth, and I felt my critical faculties freer when removed from his near presence and his compelling eyes. He was looking up and down the long room as if fain to re-create there the thought-presence of which he had spoken.

"This life," he went on, "shuts us in on every side from true apprehension, narrows our vision, cheats us with vain promises, gives us bitter for sweet. Love and hate are convertible terms, and man is pre-eminent above the creature only in his woe. Blind, blind, even the wisest of us! Man makes himself lord, and defeat mocks him in the moment of victory; the essence is too fine for our coarse handling; the diamond resolves into the elements and leaves only clay in the crucible. I read this sentence not long ago in the mystical literature it is sometimes my business to examine: 'A spirit must be where its thoughts and affections are.' To go back to the contention that Barbara is a prisoner, whether we admit or not the hypothesis that she has died; whoever detains her body has power over that only. He who touches the house of life has no spell to bind the immortal spirit. She is here in veritable similitude, with power to assume even her habit as she lived. What is the body but the shell of the flown bird?"

He seemed to speak to himself rather than to me; he walked to the end of the room and back, and sat down again beside me.

"Do not think, Miss Varney, that I undervalue the body; I am using wide terms. I think our boasted civilisation and progress,—save the

mark—has in this particular fallen far behind the science and reverence of the ancient world. The wisdom that trained the body to be the servant of the spirit and not its master; that developed to the utmost those inherent faculties which are the birthright of man,—the birthright he sells in every age for the pottage of materialism; that cultivated the extension of life and its uses to a tenure far beyond our present shortened span,—is a wisdom which seems to me ideal. And another form of reverence in ancient practice I would fain revive in modern custom. I mean the manner of disposing of our dead. Terrible indeed are our closed coffins of wood and metal, shutting in rotteness, so that what we have loved, what has been the desire of our eyes, becomes unutterably loathsome and poisonous, and we bury it gladly out of our sight. Look at Egypt for instance,—her religious care in preserving the beloved form, and in such a sanitary state that the living were in no way wronged, even by the rude embalming commonly practised. And the mystical writings indicate a higher practice and more excellent way, in which the beauty of life, the very hues of life and its texture, could be preserved, if not for ever, for an indefinite term. I have been a student of this vanished art so far as possible to my limited opportunity."

"But if our dead are buried away from us, surely the advantage is only in idea, except on sanitary grounds?"

"That is what I want to obviate, the need of burying our dead away from us. Should I not be a benefactor to my race if I spared that last pang to tender hearts; if in some consecrated temple the mother could always gaze on the face of her little one, the lineaments of the beloved parent be unforgotten by the child, the dead mistress by her lover? Have I in my solitary student life so far missed the

pulsing of the great heart of humanity, that I mistake in thinking this a boon? Are we all so anxious to forget our dead? Tell me, Miss Varney, did you for one never yearn to fold back the coffin-lid, and find the loved face beneath it pure and calm in an unchanged sleep; never feel it a sorrow upon sorrow to realise the ghastly change which depth of earth and sheeted lead must shut away, lest in the witness we go mad indeed?"

He bent towards me with the question almost as if he meant to take my hand, and his whole face was alight with enthusiasm. Evidently the subject was more to him than abstract speculation; it was one which stirred deep feeling. As he put the case it touched me also, and revived some bitter memories of unforgotten grief. I felt the tears well up into my eyes, and they were dropping down my cheek before I was aware. "Ah," he said, "you have answered me better than by any words."

I confess I wiped them away with a feeling of annoyance. I did not agree with him in the entirety he took for granted, but I could not then contest the point; the inopportune tears had to bear what construction he chose. Besides it is only young eyes which look the brighter for these natural dew. Elderly women like myself should weep in private if weep they must, as reddened features are the inevitable result.

"Sympathy is very sweet," he went on. "It is strange how our nature craves for it, how the desire for it penetrates the heart even of such an old hermit as myself. A year ago I dreamed a dream, brief and baseless, but while I dreamed Paradise came again. I found, as I thought, in Barbara the fulfilled ideal; I dreamed we were mated both for Time and for Eternity. She was well inclined to me, but—some one came between. Not her lover, this young fellow,

who is turning himself into an amateur detective with such excellent result. That came later, and grew out of the mother's ambition, not her own heart. I know when certain natures are in antagonism to mine, when they radiate an adverse magnetism. Two in this house were in opposition. You will divine their names; walls have ears perhaps. But the younger lady became her own enemy in proving mine; had she not opposed me, Barbara would not have stolen her lover. Don't look so surprised; you know all this; I know you know it. And I believe you divine also in whose hand is the clue to the dark riddle which perplexes us. Mr. and Mrs. Alleyne are blind, but your eyes are too clear to be hoodwinked."

He rose to his feet as he spoke, and I rose also in some agitation, not knowing how to answer so strange a speech.

"Unless," he continued, "unless you hoodwink yourself, frightened at your own clear-seeing. But the facts will be too strong for you very shortly, and then you will remember my words. Now, farewell." He took my hand and pressed it closely. "If I can divine an enemy, I can divine a friend also. I have one more under this roof besides Alleyne. Thank you for all you have told me, voluntarily and involuntarily, and adieu."

## CHAPTER V.

"CAN I speak to you for a moment, ma'am?"

The words were spoken at my bedroom door about a fortnight after Barbara's disappearance, a fortnight of baffled search and weary conjecture, which still left it as deep a mystery as ever. I had called an impatient "Come in," as I knelt before my largest trunk diving into its recesses for a book I wanted, and turned to see the maid Evans, the woman Barbara had nick-

named Fidgets, hesitating on the threshold.

She was a person of fifty or upwards, naturally cadaverous and dismal of visage, who had lived for many years with the Alleynes, and identified herself with the family as such old retainers are apt to do. She was attached to Eleanor, and had been her maid before she changed her name; but Barbara, who was born into her charge as it were, had, with all her wilfulness, been dear to Fidgets as the apple of her eye. I saw at once that there was something the matter beyond the cloud of sorrow on the house, for the woman was trembling with a nervous quiver of excitement, and her lantern-jawed visage was longer than ever. She came in, shut the door behind her, and stood plucking unconsciously at the empty pockets of her apron.

"I would not trouble you, ma'am, nor say a word if you were a stranger here; but being a relation, and my mistress so ill and in such grief, and I do not know where else to turn. You will know what should be done, and whether it ought to be given up to the police."

This exordium brought me to my feet. I wondered what was coming, but was not destined at once to find out; having secured her listener, Evans preferred a circuitous and crab-like progress.

"I have never been against Miss Janie in the way of not liking her. She was never one to give trouble, but always to put her hand to anything; as was only right, as Mrs. Alleyne said, being as she was in the house. But them as are so meek, and butter not melting in their mouths,—there is always a something with them, I say, that doesn't come away harmless like firing into little tempers and that. I always thought there would be trouble with Miss Janie some day, but it's not from any ill-feeling

against her that I am speaking now."

Janie,—always Janie! the burden of those dark hints of Mr. Redworth's; and now Evans also was among the prophets.

"I believe she was fond of Miss Barbara all through, as well she might be," and here Fidgets' voice trembled into a sob. "But I saw, if nobody else did, that there came to be a feeling about Mr. Sudeleigh."

I could not help shivering a little, but it may have been as much the cold of the fireless room as any dread of hearing my own vague fears take shape on the lips of another.

"It wasn't my place to say anything, but even a servant may take notice; and before ever we came here, when they were together, it was always Miss Janie he was after, and who seemed a sort of sweetheart to him when they were hardly any more than boy and girl. For he's young yet, you know, Mr. Sudeleigh is; not much more than four and twenty all told. But when we were at Filey last autumn he seemed struck all at once with Miss Barbara; she had grown a rare beauty since he had seen her, and he had no eyes for any one else. And the mistress, as was natural, wishing the match, kept putting forward our young lady and holding Miss Janie in the background. It was all as it should be; for Mr. Sudeleigh had to please his people, and Miss Janie had no call to be considered, being what she was. But I think she had a sore heart over it, though she kept it to herself, as was her way."

"Was it about this, Evans, that you wanted to consult me now?"

"Not rightly this, ma'am; but it's all in a piece with it, there having been a feeling. And when we came back and the marriage was pressed on so, I was sorry for Miss Janie, for she was in the midst of it all and heard of nothing else from morning to night. She was



fond of Miss Barbara, and yet,—and yet, ma'am, no one else had such a reason for wishing her out of the way."

"Surely you are not thinking,—Evans, I cannot hear it if you mean to cast suspicion on Miss Moorhouse. It is too terrible."

"Not from anything in my mind, ma'am, I wouldn't be so unchristian. It's something I have found and don't know what to do with, and that looks black against the young lady if anything ever did."

"What?" I asked, and I sat down on the foot of the bed feeling as if my limbs would sustain me no longer.

"Some ladies don't notice little things like dresses and that, but it's natural for me to do, as I've a charge to see what the young ladies wear. That last evening as ever was, the evening Miss Barbara was lost, Miss Janie went down to dinner in her best frock; she mostly wore it when Mr. Sudeleigh was expected, and not by her own will only, for I've heard Miss Barbara telling her to put it on. It was a white nun's cloth, and she made it up herself, with me to cut it out and fit it on her. Well, when we were called to search, and were looking all over the house and in the garden for my blessed young lady who was gone, it struck me all at once that Miss Janie had changed her gown. She had on the old black stuff one she has worn ever since; and no call to be gayer with no company,—begging your pardon, ma'am—and worse than a death in the house; though death it is, and none of us have doubted it since Mary saw Miss Barbara on her wedding-day. I didn't sleep a wink last night, sitting up in the dark and thinking how this would kill my mistress outright, and what I had better do. Miss Barbara and Miss Janie had the Blue Bedroom together, as you know, and Miss Janie is still there by herself, as the mistress has said noth-

ing about moving her. When the young ladies were put there on account of Miss Barbara being so nervous after she came back from Filey, I laid away their summer things myself in the big drawer of the wardrobe, and thought as I did so how Miss Barbara would never want hers any more, on account of the trousseau, poor dear; and not of things being as they are. I laid away with them a remnant of material that was over from a morning jacket I'd been making for the mistress while we were away,—the gray cashmere with silk flowers on it; and now she has taken to wear it in her illness, there is something amiss with the sleeve, and I have got to make the cuffs wider. I wanted the remnant out, and was looking in the drawer for it; when what should I come upon, stuffed in under the rough-dried prints that I had laid away neat and tidy with my own hands, but Miss Janie's white gown. White you can't call it any longer, and if you'll come with me, ma'am, I'd like you to see the state of it, just as it was found."

I followed across the landing and into the Blue Room, and Evans opened the wardrobe and the bottom drawer in solemn silence. The dress had been rolled together and stuffed away out of sight, and as she unfolded it before me the appearance was certainly startling. All the front of the skirt was soiled with dust and grime, and stained and smeared with blood, while the right sleeve of the body, a full one nearly to the wrist, was stiffened with the same dark dye. I could hardly blame her for thinking it suggestive of some horrible butchery, and the concealment was, to say the least of it, unfortunate. I looked at it in dismay, not knowing what to say in the first shock of discovery, which was not lightened to me by the hints that had gone before.

"No doubt it is a duty to show this to the police, but I'm thinking of

my mistress and the state she's in; the trouble of it would kill her right out, and the scandal in the family. I don't wish harm to Miss Janie, but she hadn't ought to stay here, hanging round the mistress in the way she does. And perhaps if she had a fright about it she would confess, and we should find——”

My voice came back to me with a gasp, and common sense as well, to repudiate the horrors this woman was so coolly taking for granted. “Don't say another word, Evans. It is a cruel injustice, I am sure of it. I am not blaming you; the idea was natural, but I am thankful you have not mentioned it to any one but me. You did not know about Miss Janie's accident; she told us of it at once, and the blood must have spoiled her dress. Don't you remember the doctor dressing her hand next day? He says there will always be a scar.”

I tried to speak with authority and confidence, but for the life of me I could not keep free from a tone of special pleading, a quiver of agitation. The woman looked at me with those cold blue expressionless eyes of hers, and began mechanically to fold the stained gown out of sight.

“Mr. Alleyne shall know about it of course; and he will direct you what to do, or Miss Janie herself. The dress is quite spoiled, she could not have worn it again, and no doubt thrust it into the unused drawer to be out of the way.”

Evans was not ready with an answer; but as I plainly paused for one, she said after a long minute's silence, “Very well, ma'am. If you and Mr. Alleyne are satisfied I have no more to say. I did know Miss Janie's hand was hurt; but my mistress told me she was puzzled about how she could have done it, and could not get her to say.”

Unconvinced! I felt that as I went back to my room, and shut my-

self in with every pulse tingling, cold as it was, to think over what had passed and to assure myself anew that, despite of Mr. Redworth's vague hints and the servant's more coarsely spoken suspicions, I was confident of Janie's innocence. It seemed to fall on me to be her advocate,—on me, who had never loved her warmly, and to whom the Frost-cousinship was not an endeared tie. But, as I remembered with a throb of pity which may have aroused some latent Quixotism, if I failed her and the Alleynes were led to doubt her, where had she to turn? Her father had for years treated her with absolute indifference, willing that she should be a burden on other shoulders; and I knew from Gregory that he had lately accepted an appointment in Bermuda, and was now on his way out there with Mrs. Moorhouse and the younger children.

It was my duty to tell Gregory what had happened, and to place matters in such a light that he would see the imperative need of guarding Janie from possible annoyance, if not actual danger. He had left the house after luncheon, announcing his intention of visiting a sick woman who lived at the extreme boundary of the parish, and the walk would be a long one. I looked at my watch; there was no prospect of his return for an hour at least, and I confess my courage sank more and more as I thought over the communication I had to make. Poor Gregory! He was fighting his way back to a hardly sustained composure, and all I had to tell would tear open the wound he strove to staunch, and cause it to bleed anew. I stood at the window looking out over the wintry garden, where the deep snow of that December night still lingered in drifted patches, frozen too hard to disappear quickly, though the new year had come in with milder weather, and the gray, windy sky seemed to threaten a further change.

Eleanor would be resting at this hour I knew ; indeed she had not left her room since the Christmas week ; but Janie was probably below, and I might take the opportunity to draw something further from her about her accident.

I, too, had noticed that she was reluctant to speak of it ; but, poor child, I doubt if she had ever been encouraged to obtrude her woes and mischances on others. After the first terror and misery of that dreadful night, she had been in her quiet way a stay to us all, soothing Eleanor, thoughtful for Gregory, doing her utmost to stand between us and all that could intensify our aching sense of loss. The new and horrible character in which I was required to view her seemed utterly incongruous, was utterly incongruous, I told myself a dozen times as I stood irresolute at the window, with the gentle modest personality I was learning to know. Yet what was it Evans had said to me just now about these meek, self-contained natures shutting in something dangerous, which rare occasion or rare provocation might bring to light ? The wind swept down from the wooded hill which was Coldhope, and drove against the glass the first drops of rain from that gloomy sky. It almost seemed as if I could hear Mr. Redworth's voice beside me in the whispered reminder,—the suggestion of my own mind that I could know nothing of the mysteries and inconsistencies of the criminal intellect—that it is, as a great writer of our time has said, not to be paralleled with that of ordinary mankind, but regarded as a horrible wonder apart.

Poor Janie ! I found the book for which I had been searching, and descended with it to the parlour. There she was busy with her work,—some plain stitchery for charitable uses over which I had frequently seen her employed. She looked up at my entrance,

quick-handed to wheel forward a comfortable chair and brighten the rather neglected fire ; and then respected my occupation by sitting opposite in companionable silence.

It was true I held the book open before me, and from time to time turned over the pages ; but my eye gathered no meaning from them, and I was indeed watching her from behind that screen, wondering what I should say. She was quite unaware of my observation and seemed herself to be deep in thought, for now and again the flying needle would pause, the sewing drop on her knee, and the small grave face, which had grown thinner since I came to Ditchborough, look away into the distance with a perplexed furrow knitting her young brow. It was after one of these pauses that I said,—dashing abruptly into my subject, as I despaired of any natural prelude : “ I saw Evans when I was up-stairs, and she was much distressed over one of your dresses.”

“ Yes ! ” she said, as if unconscious of any special meaning. “ Poor old Fidgets ! It is torn again I know, but as I shall mend it myself she need not take it to heart.”

“ It was not about mending anything. She had found a white dress put away in a drawer, very much stained,—with blood.”

Her face changed at my words, but the expression which crossed it was one of intense pain, not fear or discomposure. “ That is spoiled,” she said briefly ; “ I put it away.”

“ Evans found it,” I went on, stumbling over my difficulty, “ and she remembered when you wore it last. She showed it to me. My dear, it is dreadfully stained, and soiled with dirt as well. Would you mind telling me exactly how your accident happened ? I have never heard.”

Janie gave a moaning cry and covered her face ; I saw between her slender fingers that she had flushed up

to her hair. "I hate to think of it," she said at last. "I cannot bear to recall that night."

"My dear," I said again, "I do not like to press you. But I think it would be better if you told me or your uncle, safer, I mean. It might be thought strange that the dress was hidden away in that manner,—the servants might talk,—and you know at these sad times people take up the wildest ideas——"

Vague as was the hint my bungling speech had given, the arrow went home. The shielding hands dropped as she looked up at me, first in incredulous bewilderment, and then with dawning comprehension. The wave of colour ebbed away and left her white, and she rose to her feet as if drawn up by the magnitude of the horror.

"Cousin Susan, is it possible?" She put her hands to her throat as if suffocating. "Are you meaning to tell me that people might think *I* had harmed her,—that the blood was Barbara's?"

"One cannot tell what people may think when confronted with such a mystery. Don't be distressed; I wanted to do all for your protection."

She looked at me almost sternly, with her young white face so changed and set. "Have you such a thought of me, Cousin Susan?" she demanded; and as I looked back at her in that first moment I had no doubt of her innocence, and could answer truthfully, "No."

Her hands dropped from her neck, and she crouched back into the chair she had left. "I have deserved it," she said. "Whatever they say of me, I have deserved it all."

It was dreadful to see her rocking herself to and fro and moaning, a low, wailing moan like one in extremity of pain. Just then I think she hardly remembered my presence, and did not heed it at all. Presently she said:

"What was it you asked me,—about my accident?"

"I thought it would be a safeguard if your uncle or I knew what had happened, and could answer if questioned."

"I will try to tell you. I had been—unhappy for some time. It was no one's fault, only my own folly; but it was hard to bear. I felt worse as the wedding came so near; it was in my heart to pray that anything might postpone it,—anything, anything,—not dreaming how terribly the prayer would be answered. At my worst times I almost hated Barbara: she had so much and valued it so lightly; and you know what it says in the Bible, 'He that hateth his brother——'"

She shuddered violently and covered her face; and the voice I thought to have silenced whispered within me,—can it be only for this—such an agony of repentance and remorse?

"That day, that evening, was the hardest of all, the ache of hopeless pain, the struggle for concealment. I longed for the dinner to be over like some wretch on the rack to be out of active torment. I felt as if I should die, should faint, should betray myself with another word. When you all left the table I went away up stairs. I sit sometimes in the attic to be quiet, but I was afraid of intrusion even there. I have kept one end tidy for myself, but I went to the other, where I could hide myself behind the boxes and lumber, not thinking of the dust upon the floor. I am subject to fainting-fits, and I tried to get the window open; I thought the cold air would stop the deadly sickness at my heart. It has a broken edge, that casement, a sort of spike in the leaded work, and as I tugged at it I felt it pierce my wrist, and then I remember no more. When I came to myself I was lying under the window in a pool of blood; I had torn my hand free in falling. That is all. As soon as I could, I

dragged myself down stairs, horror-stricken to find how late it was, and to think of the questions I should have to answer. I bound up the wound as well as I could, and changed my dress; and I hid that one where Evans found it. I got down just as the alarm was given that Barbara was missing. That night was terrible to all of us; but think how terrible to me, when such an awful answer had come close upon my prayer!"

"I will tell Gregory how the accident happened. I can do so without going into motives. But I wish you had not hidden the dress."

"It was only to get it out of the way; I did not want to be questioned. And since, I have felt I could not bear to see it; it would bring to mind all the evil that was in my heart."

"You must not dwell on that now, Janie; it would be morbid. I can understand the feeling you have about it; but if we were judged by our thoughts, who would be guiltless? And you know you would never have harmed her in deed." I paused for the assurance, but as she did not answer I went on: "Gregory shall speak to Evans, and the dress shall be put away where it will never trouble any of us again. But tell me this. I have wondered sometimes if you have any guess, any conjecture of your own about the mystery. All the rest of us have had our own theories, but I have never heard you advance one. If Barbara ever made any confidence to you which would throw light on it, you would be doing wrong to respect it now."

She looked up at me fully as I spoke, and then away at the fire; there was an interval of silence, while she seemed to be considering. When she spoke again it was with greater self-possession, and a return to the ordinary manner which her extreme agitation had broken through.

"Barbara never told me anything.

It is true I have fancied things, but not from any foundation of knowledge; and knowing what I should feel myself under suspicion, I could not cast it on another by what is a mere guess. We were good friends always, but she was never one to make confidences, and I don't think she quite forgave me something which happened the autumn before last. It was not my fault: I could not help it; but it was through me Aunt Eleanor found out she was meeting Mr. Redworth. No, I have nothing to tell. Barbara was nervous latterly, and seemed anxious to get away from Ditchborough, but she never told me why."

The hall-door opened and shut, with its usual heavy bang and a rush of wind into the house. Gregory had returned, tired with his walk, but doubtless the exertion had been salutary both for mind and body. It seemed strange to see Janie meet him with her usual cheerful composure, helping him off with his wet coat and fetching the slippers she had warmed, when I thought of the tragical subject that had just been under discussion. Would any ordinary girl have been able so completely to put aside the passion of remorse I had witnessed, the agitation of finding she had laid herself open to so dreadful a suspicion? The servant's words came back anew when I asked myself whether such a faculty of self-suppression might not shut in something dangerous.

Gregory had always liked Janie, and accepted willingly at her hands the small daughter-like attentions she gladly paid him. I noticed long ago she was more at home with him than with Eleanor, and he had been used to receive them from her rather than from Barbara, so there was not the pang of seeing another take the place of his lost child.

Yes, he was fond of Janie, and



honestly indignant for her sake later on when I told him of Evans's discovery and hinted at a possible danger. "You did quite right, Susan, and I will speak to the woman myself. No mystery must be made of the affair; she must see we know all about it and have no such thought. By George! [Gregory was not always strictly clerical in moments of excitement] I feel inclined to send her packing for the suggestion; but of course she is Eleanor's maid and a privileged person, and has been considerate for *her*. Poor little girl! She was broken-hearted at the loss of her companion when Barbara was only going to be married; the woman must be mad to think she would be suspected of this. And even on physical grounds look at the absurdity; what could a little thing like Janie have done against a splendid creature like Barbara? Ah, Susan, when I sent her on that errand I sent her to her death, but it was not by Janie's hand."

## CHAPTER VI.

GREGORY'S walk had not been entirely solitary; Mr. Redworth had overtaken him on the way home, and they had gone in company as far as the gates of Coldhope. He had asked with interest touching the inquiry, and repeated some former strictures about the action of the police; he thought they were carrying it too far afield. "They ought to narrow the circle, Alleyne," he said: "and if I were you I would begin with a house to house search within a radius of five miles. I will set the example by throwing open Coldhope."

But of course Gregory told him it was out of the question. Inquiries had been made, but he could not subject his parishioners and neighbours to the insult of a search, unless on the track of some positive clue. I could not help thinking the advocacy of

looking nearer home was of a piece with his former hints against Janie. Gregory had told him the police were of opinion Barbara had been at once removed to a distance, and probably taken out of England in the first hours of the alarm.

That was a night of wild weather. The wind, which had been high through the afternoon, rose at sundown to a positive gale, wailing and shrieking round the Rectory gables and chimneystacks all through the passage of the dark hours, while rain streamed down in every lull of the tempest. I seldom sleep well in a high wind: it seems to excite something electrical in my nature and renders me restless; and there had been enough in the events and conflicting emotions of the day to drive sleep from my pillow, even had the elements been calm with the stillness of frost or the warm breath of summer. I lay staring into the darkness, calling up Evans's face as she unfolded the soiled gown; then Janie's in the first outbreak of indignation and wounded innocence, followed by that crouching figure moaning and self-accused in extremity of remorse. I recalled Barbara as she came in from her winter walk glowing with life and beauty, gay and proud with her lover beside her; and then with a shiver of dread the mute figure moving away from us in its trailing silks and shrouding laces. The wind moaned outside like a voice in pain, sobbing and wailing round the house as might some homeless spirit shut out for evermore from the circle of love and fellowship. I fancied I heard as well a voice that wept within, and restless steps that wandered up and down; but doubtless my imagination figured these out of the natural noises of the storm.

The wind dropped towards morning, and I slept at last, wearied out, and woke to find the dawn breaking on a peaceful gray world, and rain pouring

down monotonously from a canopy of leaden cloud.

As I rose and dressed, I noticed that the lawn was strewn with broken twigs and branches from the trees, and the last traces of the frozen snow were washed away. Gregory was just issuing from his room as I came out of mine ; we met and greeted on the stairs with the usual comments on the wet morning and stormy night ; he, like me, had been disturbed by it. "I could have declared," he said, "that some one was knocking at the front door and throwing up gravel at my window ; but it was nothing but the force of the wind."

We went down together, and in the hall found the door set open, and three of the servants standing there, looking at a brown paper parcel which lay across the threshold. Mary, who had come back to us urged by maternal scoldings, was the first to speak : it had fallen in, she said, when the door was opened as if set up against it on the outside ; and they thought it must have been there all night, as it was soaked with wet. She looked at it, ready to scent a mystery, as if in her opinion it was something uncanny.

The parcel, which was more bulky than heavy, was wrapped in brown paper and tied with stout string. Gregory lifted it and turned it over, but no address was visible, nor any trace of writing that the rain had blurred. "I shall assume," he said, "that it is meant for me ;" and carrying it to a side-table in the breakfast-room he cut the fastening strings with his knife and pulled apart the outer wrappings.

The package had been done up carefully in several sheets of thick paper, and an inner string tied together in a tight roll the skirt of a woman's dress. I saw Gregory's face change, and I think he and I recognised it in the same instant ; it was the very skirt of shot silken gray that Barbara had worn the night of her disappearance.

His hands trembled as he spread it out, and we looked in each other's faces in dumb amazement. Folded closely within, so as to occupy the least possible compass, was all the other clothing, while still recognisable, pinned to the bodice close above the crimson breast-knot, was a bunch of withered violets which had been her lover's gift, brought from Lynncaster on the fatal day. Janie had come quietly behind us and I heard her exclaim ; she seemed both frightened and excited, and hers was the suggestion that there might be a letter. "Surely," she said, "she would not send the things back without a word."

Gregory shook his head at this, but we made the search ; unfolding everything, turning out the pocket of the dress and examining the protecting papers ; but there was not a scrap of handwriting of any sort. The only fresh discovery was a parcel in one of the shoes ; a handkerchief with her initials folded round the two rings, Dick Sudeleigh's diamond hoop and the emerald cluster which had been my gift, tied together upon the slender filigree chain she had worn about her throat. The father held them up to me and then dropped them back upon the heap. "That disposes of one of the theories," he said. "Robbery was not the motive. And Barbara never did this. No change, other than a miracle, would have made her send these rags and relics back to mock us in our grief ;" and he turned abruptly away from us to hide his tears.

Alas, the ill-omened parcel laid at our door in the night elucidated nothing ; the mystery of Barbara's disappearance gathered all the darker for that will-o'-the-wisp of mocking light which gleamed a momentary hope. It was of course examined by the detective, but no clue could be obtained as to whence it had come. There was, as I have said, no address ; the sheets of wrapping paper were of the ordinary

kind which might be found in any house ; the strong twine with which it had been tied was in no way peculiar. Doubtless it was deposited in the porch by some person in the secret ; but at what time of the evening, or night, or early morning, remained unknown. Gregory had fancied he heard knocking at the door and pebbles thrown at his window, but that could only have been the noise of the storm ; no one coming secretly on such an errand would desire to call attention to his presence. The clothing was quite uninjured, and might have been laid aside in the safety of her own home ; but there were two points to which the detective drew attention. The thin slippers were scratched and cut as if by walking some distance over a rough road, and the lace edge of the petticoat was soiled and frayed ; this, Evans declared, was not the case with either before that night's use. It was thought to point to Barbara having gone away on foot, rather than being forced away from us in a carriage, which our minds had dwelt upon as probable.

As I have said, the mystery was deeper than ever. Eleanor was very greatly distressed and upset, and would have the clothes brought up to her bedside, and then could scarcely see them for the fast-flowing tears. Evans looked grimly on, and when asked for an opinion said : " Indeed, ma'am, I should say that something had happened to frighten the persons who had them in charge, within the last day or two, and they were afraid to keep them any longer hid away."

It was not difficult for me to divine at what her words pointed ; and in the conviction that Barbara was dead she was as strong as Gregory himself.

Towards the end of February our mournful quietude was disturbed by a visit from Lady Sudeleigh. There had been frequent interchange of

letters between her and Eleanor, and deep had been the sympathy and concern expressed by all Dick's relatives for the Alleynes in their grief. The later correspondence, however, had related chiefly to the Sudeleighs' wish that Dick should go abroad. While the search for Barbara was still active nothing would have induced him to leave England, but, now that it had been practically abandoned, except for an occasional advertisement in a daily paper, there was no reason for delay ; and the yachting-cruise, in company with one or two congenial companions, would help to break through the gloom and despondency which had settled down over him since the fatal night. Lady Sudeleigh was anxious the Alleynes should join in persuading him to go ; but though Eleanor would not lift a finger to detain him, I could see she was reluctant. So long as he was coming and going, keeping the police vigilant and fanning the failing hope of the inquiry into a semblance of life, she would not wholly despair ; it seemed to her that with Dick's departure Barbara would be lost indeed.

She was greatly altered since I came to Ditchborough, and not alone by the sorrow which weighed equally on her husband ; she had given up the struggle to maintain her usual habits, and fallen altogether into an invalid life. The only change between day and night was her removal to a sofa in her room and back again to bed ; and though her pains did not appear to increase in violence, they were of frequent occurrence, and the dread and expectation of them was continual. Gregory hoped her friend's visit would rouse her. Lady Sudeleigh was an energetic, active-minded person who looked habitually on the bright side of things ; and she would urge Eleanor to consent to the consultation and surgical treatment which Dr. Carpenter advised.

There was, however, another alteration in Eleanor which I had begun to notice, perhaps before it was perceptible to any one else, and that was her growing reluctance to have Janie about her. At first it seemed natural that Janie's should on all occasions be the hand to minister; but now, for those little offices in which she did not care to depend on Evans, she began to turn exclusively to me. I was very willing to write for her and read to her, or to sit by her couch and talk when she felt able for the effort; and as we had been companions in youth and had many recollections in common, her wish for my society was not extraordinary; still I felt uneasy for the girl's sake as the difference became more marked. She took it all with her usual gentleness, but I saw a shade of pain cross her face when Eleanor would tell her to "go and send Evans;" or to "see if her uncle wanted her in the parish, as Susan would read aloud." I wondered at first if Evans had given voice to her suspicions despite the ground Gregory had taken up about that matter, but I do not believe it was so. I do not think Evans ever said a word to her mistress; but is it quite impossible that some emanation of what was in her mind should pass without voice into the moral atmosphere and be vaguely absorbed by another? Certain it is that the maid disliked and suspected the girl, and the mistress's affection cooled.

Eleanor would now and then drop a word, as if in explanation of having been more than usually impatient or ungracious. "You don't know what it is to me, Susan, for that girl to be here alive and well when our darling has been taken from us. You remember where it says, 'one shall be taken and the other left'? But oh, why was it not Janie whom nobody wants, instead of Barbara who was the very light of our eyes?"

No. 434.—VOL. LXXIII.

Janie whom nobody wants! Sad that her nineteen summers and her gentle ways should have won no more than this in the house which had been her home.

Gregory wanted her, however; she had always been a useful help to him in parish ministrations, and she continued the work till certain hindrances arose which I shall recount in their own place later on.

As all this will show, I spent much of my time with Eleanor; but Gregory would now and then descend on us and command me to go out. I had no business, he said, to imprison myself in a sick-room when I had so lately left one of my own. I had come into the country for change and rest, and I must remember fresh air was an essential in the prescription. So he would take me drives behind Red Saxon, and long rambles on foot which I liked even better,—over hill and dale, among the Coldhope woods, and over the breezy expanses of the moor. It was a mild February, and before the last days had gone by there became perceptible, thrilling in the air and pulsing through animate nature, the mysterious exaltation of the Spring. And another errand sometimes took me abroad, though only to the little gray church. The schoolmaster, who was also the organist, met with a mischance, laming his shoulder by a rather serious dislocation, and I offered to fill his place in the church-services while he was disabled. It was years since I had touched the instrument, but a proficiency once acquired is seldom wholly lost, and by dint of weekday practices I was soon able to undertake the Sunday hymns and voluntaries to Gregory's satisfaction, if not altogether to my own. By a stroke of good fortune the organ was a finer instrument than could have been expected in such a locality as Ditchborough, and a first step in the restoration of the church had been to.

put it in thorough repair. I cannot say it was a very blissful occupation, accompanying the nasal voices of that drawling choir; but in those solitary practices I did have some happy hours over the yellow keyboard, recalling well-loved harmonies to which my fingers had for long been strangers.

But I have wandered from Lady Sudeleigh's visit, which was fixed for the end of February, and Dick had promised to come over, while she was with us, for a single night, to bid farewell both to the Alleynes and to his mother before setting sail. The Rector's brougham went all the way to Lynncchester to bring her over with her maid and luggage, as the expresses from the south did not at all regard our nearer wayside station; and she arrived, as I had done, on the edge of dusk, though later in the evening by all the advance of the year.

I had vaguely expected a large imposing person, something after the mould of Eleanor, a feminine prototype of the tall wide-shouldered stature of her son; but the figure that emerged from the brougham, and was disembarrassed in the hall of a heavy travelling-cloak enriched with sable, was altogether small in its proportions, imposing only by virtue of an erect and stately carriage which made the most of every inch of her diminutive height. She was taken straight to Eleanor, who was anxiously awaiting her, and what the two mothers found to say to each other in that meeting so full of sadness to the one, I know not; but they were shut in alone together for the best part of an hour. After that Lady Sudeleigh rested in her room till dinner-time, and I felt it was really my first sight of her when she and Janie came together into the lighted drawing-room

where Gregory and I were awaiting them.

She was a beautiful little old lady, quite past all pretensions to youth; who might indeed have been taken for Dick's grandmother rather than his mother, and have walked in the character of a white witch godmother out of the pages of a fairy-book. She used an ebony stick for some slight lameness which hardly disfigured her gait, and her hair, which was silver-white, was turned back over a cushion from her small face with its aquiline features and still delicate complexion of ivory and pink. There was a brilliance and vivacity about her that one does not usually associate with the decline of life, and I should think those black eyes of hers could hardly have been more piercing in her girlhood than now when she had counted five and sixty years. She made no secret of her age, rather taking pride in it, perhaps with the feeling that she bore it to the full as gracefully as younger women did their youth. Her gown of gray brocade became her, and so did the black laces which crowned her silver hair and draped her throat, with the flash of a diamond among them here and there. As we stood together at the fire waiting for dinner, I noticed how every movement of her silken draperies shook out a subtle odour of sandalwood, a perfume which ever since in my mind has been associated with the vivacious personality of that imperious little dame. Dick's mother was completely different from my expectations; but as Janie and I followed into the dining-room the gray train which Gregory escorted, I admired her with all, — not my heart perhaps, but whatever stands for it in the unloving appreciation we give to a stranger.

*(To be continued.)*



## OXFORD IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

FROM a variety of causes, and in particular from the immense amount of ancient documentary evidence which has survived, and the unwearied labour which has been devoted to its elucidation by successive generations of archaeologists, it is easier to reconstitute the Oxford of the thirteenth century than any other English city of that era. Fortunately no great disaster has obliterated its principal lines, and, roughly speaking, its chief streets run to-day precisely as they ran six hundred years ago. Yet, for all that, a modern visitor, familiar as he might be with the city of the nineteenth century, might well be excused if, on stepping back into the Oxford of 1295, he found himself in no small danger of losing his way. Once out of the four or five chief thoroughfares, he could scarcely avoid being entangled in a multitude of narrow lanes and alleys intersecting the city in all directions, and whose modern representatives and survivors are such passages as Frewen Court, Logic Lane, and Friars' Entry. There would be some strange alterations even in the streets he knew. To say nothing of the gates and posterns which blocked every exit from the city, of the rows of butchers' stalls which were ranged down the centre of Queen Street, of unknown churches here and there, of the city moat extending halfway across Broad Street, he would be still further confused by the loss of almost every landmark familiar to him. He would recognise the towers of no more than two churches, St. Frideswide's and St. Michael's. The ground now occupied by the Shel-

donian and the Printing-House was then covered by the waters of the Canditch. Where now stands the Town-Hall he would see the huddled tenements of the Lesser Jewry, whose owners had five years before been expelled from the kingdom. But what would astonish him most would be the apparently complete absence of the colleges. In place of Magdalen there was a more or less dilapidated hospital standing in the meadows by the roadside. Instead of New College he would stumble upon the city rubbish-heap. Similar surprises would await him as he sought the sites of all but three of the modern colleges, for only Merton, University, and Balliol were in existence; and he might well be pardoned for failing to trace in so much of them as was then visible any resemblance to the colleges of the present day. In lieu of them, scattered about the streets and alleys of the town, were scores of houses dignified with the names of halls, each nominally under the control, though a control of the most shadowy character, of a Master of Arts, where the predecessors of the modern undergraduate lodged, and fed, and quarrelled with each other and the citizens.

Still more impressive would have been the change which the visitor would have found in the suburbs. Suburbs indeed, in the modern sense of a couple of fair-sized towns to north and south-east of the ancient city, there were none. A sparse line of houses straggled up each side of St. Giles'; there was a tiny cluster of tenements beyond Cherwell, among which stood in the roadway the church

of St. Clement's. But the absence of terraces and villas was more than compensated for. To the south of the town rose out of the low meadows the group of buildings of the Dominicans, whose memory is locally preserved by Friars' Street and Blackfriars' Road; and from the gardens of the Dominicans there must have been plainly visible across the fields the great church of the Grey Friars' convent, rising out of the narrow streets of St. Ebbe's parish high above the city wall. Further round towards the north, where now lies St. Mary's cemetery, in the watermeadows among the maze of streams into which the Thames breaks, stood the new buildings of Osney, one of the stateliest of Benedictine monasteries; and to the north of it, beyond the present railway-station, the Cistercians lived in their scarcely less notable house Rewley Abbey. Crossing the Thames from Rewley towards the northern suburbs, where now is Worcester, one would have come upon a Carmelite Friary, and on the opposite side of the way stood the royal palace of Beaumont; while further towards Holywell were Durham College and the Austin Friars. Nor was it only the buildings that would surprise the modern mind. Oxford was still a great trading-centre and its two great fairs, St. Frideswide's and St. Giles', were of more than local importance. On one of the two weekly market-days one would find the four main streets, wide as they are, blocked by the crowds of vendors that from time immemorial had been permitted to pitch their stalls or stand their carts in rows along the centre of the roadway, precisely as they do at Kendal to-day. There were manufactures also: glovers pursued the craft which still lingers at Woodstock; a small community of fullers and weavers lived by the Cherwell. One can scarcely realise, too,

the mass of traffic which now is whisked across England by the railway, but which in the thirteenth century poured each day through the streets of a city like Oxford on its way from market to market and from town to town.

Among this labyrinth of streets and lanes there lived the most turbulent and ungovernable population in England. Every English town in the Middle Ages had its own insubordinate elements, riotous apprentices, quarrelsome journeymen, runaway villeins, outlaws, and cutpurses, lurking among the city purlieus. But at none of them do we read of such serious outbreaks of lawlessness as at Oxford, for no other of Oxford's size contained that city's peculiar element. An undergraduate of the thirteenth century was a widely different being from his successor of the nineteenth, who is surrounded by everything that can conduce to a life of studious enjoyment, and whose ideas of disorder, thanks to the efficiency of the double machinery of Police and Proctors, do not run beyond a casual bout of fisticuffs on the Fifth of November or the breach of some peaceful citizen's window. In their stead one has to conjure up a shifting mass of some hundreds of students, lads of all ages, many of them Irish or Welsh, some of good blood, the great bulk apparently possessed of no more property than a few clothes and a weapon or two, lodging where they chose or where they could, some at a hall, some at a tavern, many of them dependent on charity for their very food, restless, noisy, quarrelsome, attached to the university by no more than the loosest ties, plainly beyond any sort of control. It is clear, moreover, that, included in the comprehensive term of clerk, for there was no special title appropriated to the undergraduate, were a large number of men to whom no deed

of violence came amiss, and who were in fact nothing less than practised criminals. Amid such an assemblage of unquiet spirits, in an age when every man went, and had need to go, armed, the university statute which still forbids the carriage of deadly weapons, the city regulation that any armed person abroad at night should be seen to his lodging by the watch, were, as will be seen, no meaningless forms. The most trivial occasion, a hot word in a tavern, was apt to flare up into a brawl, and a brawl was quick to grow to the dimensions of a riot, in which it was odd if life was not lost. The conflicting claims of Mayor and Chancellor unhappily prevented the establishment of any real control, of even any force charged with the duty of preserving order, beyond half a dozen night-watchmen at the city centre. Once the flame well alight, there seems to have been nothing for it but to allow the fire to burn itself out as speedily as might be, and thank heaven it was no worse. It seems ridiculous to read, as one does read, of mobs of students sacking a citizen's house, besieging the Papal Legate at Osney, rescuing by force a malefactor from the hands of the sheriff's guard, or plundering an abbey. But such things actually took place.

The fortunate preservation of some fragments of the Rolls of the Oxford coroners for the close of the thirteenth and earlier years of the fourteenth centuries has provided us with some remarkable pictures of the insecurity of life in Oxford during that period. How common in fact were deeds of violence may be judged by the fact that at the Eyre of 1285 there were mentioned, in the course of the proceedings before the Royal Justices, no less than thirty cases of murder and homicide, all of which must have been committed within the seven preceding years, possibly in a shorter period, and

twenty at least of which took place in the city and its suburbs. Twenty deaths from violence within a period of seven years is, it must be allowed, a remarkable number for a city whose normal inhabitants could not have exceeded four thousand persons. And yet it is by no means certain that even these thirty cases made up a complete list, as the Eyre only dealt with such as affected the royal revenue, as most murders presumably would. The Coroners' Rolls are scarcely less striking. Although they do not in all probability contain any thing like a full catalogue of all the inquests held during the years in question, and though the fragments are obviously incomplete and only deal with broken periods, yet we have full records of fourteen cases of murder and homicide between 1297 and 1307, of three in 1314, one in 1319, and of two each in 1321 and 1322. In thirteen of the twenty-two cases the offenders were either not known or had escaped apprehension; in six it is not clear whether they had been apprehended or not; in three alone it is certain that the culprits had been lodged in gaol. In thirteen of the cases students are the offenders, and among the students concerned Irish and Welsh clerks are prominent.

It is, however, in the details revealed by the evidence at the inquests that the greatest interest lies. In the first case we find it recorded that two students, John Scurf and Madoc of Wales, and one Michael, the manciple, or butler, of Bull Hall, had at curfew sallied out into the streets and attacked all whom they met. The hue and cry, the alarm raised in case of disorder, at the sound of which every law-abiding man was expected to turn out armed to preserve the peace, brought out into the street a number of citizens, one of whom, John Metes-charp, was immediately shot by the

butler. All the assailants at once fled and escaped justice. In a second case we find at the same fatal hour of curfew, at which six out of these twenty-two outrages occurred, an attack made upon a townsman's son by the followers of a stranger, who was apparently a man of position, and was lodged at one of the inns in the city. The occasion of the assault is not clear; apparently it was purely gratuitous, as the object of it was unarmed and was occupied for a moment between two stalls in the Butchery. Wounded in the forehead by a cut from a groom's sword, he ran for help into his father's house, and obtaining weapons, he, his father, and a friend, pursued the offending party towards their inn. The result was an affray in which the groom in question was fatally wounded. In a third case, as a fuller was leaving the North Gate in the twilight of a January afternoon, he was set upon by a gang of four Irish clerks and fatally stabbed, the actual murderer again escaping. In June, 1303, a student is found in the morning dead in the street, murdered by two other students and a groom. An inquest of 1301 provides us with a singularly vivid picture of the night-side of Oxford life. Between the sites of All Souls' College and the Radcliffe Camera, there ran in the thirteenth century a narrow street lined on each side with students' halls. In one of them there lived a Northamptonshire student, John of Hampslape. About curfew-time on an evening in December he had stepped for a moment out of his hall, which lay at the north end of the building then called the Great Schools. Lower down the street he heard in the darkness a dispute between two students, Thomas of Horncastle and Nicholas de la Marche, which, as he came up, he saw terminate in the usual manner by one of the two drawing his knife. In his anxiety to pre-

vent murder, John of Hampslape ran between them and, accidentally or otherwise, was stabbed to the heart. The knife indeed plays an unpleasantly prominent part in these inquests, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that it was worn by every student. Time after time one reads the same record, that after an argument one or other of the disputants ends the discussion by stabbing his opponent. Besides the cases already mentioned we read of a Welsh clerk in another of those fatal squabbles being stabbed by a Master of Arts of the strangely Jewish name of Elijah of Mount Gomorrah. Other inquests relate to the murder of a prostitute by a student, to a stabbing-case by a Master of Arts, one John Seton, and several other similar fatalities. All these were the work of the knife; but if the knife was first it was by no means alone in providing work for the coroner. Sword, dagger, and crossbow each show plain enough in the records of his court.

Our Coroners' Rolls sometimes rise well above such commonplaces of crime as a scuffle in a hall or a squabble in a wine-shop. Perhaps the case of Gilbert de Foxlee, in one of the inquests of 1306, contains the most curious details as well as the most graphic account of a fatal affray, of any of the cases noted in the present Rolls. Tailors must unbend at times, and it seems that on the night of St. John's Eve, June 23rd, the tailors of Oxford were in the habit of unbending very far indeed. It was their custom to celebrate on that evening a festival of so prolonged a character that they usually did not break up till dawn. Upon this particular occasion in 1306, after midnight, when they had a right to expect that they would find the streets in that part of the town deserted, they and their friends went out into High Street and commenced what was apparently some sort of

formal country-dance. Their evolutions, however, were interrupted by a clerk, one Gilbert of Foxlee, who came upon them, the account states, with his sword drawn, determined, apparently in a spirit of pure mischief, to break up the dance. Some of the party, who knew him, held him back and did their best to get him away peaceably; but their efforts were fruitless. He tore himself away from them and sprang again at the dancers, aiming a blow at one as he came round in the figure, which but for a prompt movement on his part would certainly have cost him a hand. This was more than even an Oxford tailor could stand, and the whole party seem to have turned upon the clerk. One wounded him in the sword-arm; a second stabbed him in the back; a cut on the head from a third brought him to the ground. It would have been well if things had gone no further. But a tailor's blood, one takes it, is as apt to boil as that of any one else, and a serving-man struck at the prostrate student with some sort of an axe (called a *sparsh*), inflicting a terrible wound in the left shin, which, after a lingering illness of eight weeks, proved fatal to the orgulous Gilbert.

Scarcely less picturesque, and not without an element of pathos, is the account of the death of a lad of good family, the son of Lord Stapleton, on May 29th, 1307. He lived, it seems, in an inn on the east side of Oxford, and on the preceding Sunday evening had gone into the street beneath the east wall, a thoroughfare now covered in part by New College garden and in part by the buildings between that and High Street. He was there set upon by a gang of five persons, three of them students. One stabbed him in the right shoulder; another wounded him seriously in the back. The unhappy lad, for he seems to have been no more, managed to run

as far as High Street and fell insensible by the East Gate. There his companions, coming into the town from their games in the fields outside the gate, presumably the meadows where Magdalen now stands, found him, and carried him to his inn, at which he died the next day. One of the murderers, Robert of Knotton, a scrivener, escaped; the other, together with one of the accessories, was secured by the bailiffs and committed to the assizes.

This continual lawlessness on the part of the students, which neither university nor city could suppress, must have been found, as Thorold Rogers remarks, almost unbearable by the latter, especially when taken in connection with the feeling that the constant growth of university privileges bid fare to crumble away all the city's rights. One does not wonder that half a century later the irritation had swollen to such proportions that a more than usually severe riot between Town and Gown ended in the former setting to work in right good earnest and causing the death of some forty scholars, in a conflict which lasted for the greater part of four days, emptied the city of the detested scholars, and caused the forfeiture of its charter. Even more galling than these sporadic cases of riotousness were the outbreaks caused by a feeling which has quite passed away in our own time, the jealousies between the Northern and Southern students. Frequently, no doubt, the trouble ended in nothing worse than broken heads. But sometimes it was quite otherwise, and four of our twenty-two deaths are directly due to these feuds. One was that of a certain Luke Horton, living in Cat Street, who on leaving his house late at night was so unfortunate as to run into a party of wild Northern students who were, or had been, engaged in fighting the Southerners up and down



the streets. The savage character of these broils may be realised from the fact that, on the mere suspicion that the man was a Southerner, one of the Northern students drew his sword and cut him down at once. On June 26th, 1322, one of these territorial riots was going on at the junction of the modern Ship and Cornmarket Streets, when one Gilbert de Crofton was stabbed by a dagger in the back. He staggered on towards Turl Street, but there met another opponent, who shot him in the head, from the effects of which he died on the succeeding Sunday. But all records of Northern and Southern strife fade into insignificance before the great fight in Merton Street and Grove Street (then St. John's and Grove Lanes) on May 4th, 1314. This was no brawl between half a dozen students, or a midnight scuffle in a dark alley. It was a veritable pitched battle, apparently of the most deliberate and prolonged character, the combatants being armed with swords and bucklers, bows, arrows, and other weapons, and the fighting taking place in broad daylight at three o'clock of the afternoon. Windows bearing on the scene of the conflict were utilised by cross-bowmen. In one chamber of Goter Hall, which stood close to the west wall of Merton Chapel and whose outlook therefore commanded Grove Street, were five men armed with bows. An arrow from one of them struck a student in the street on the top of the left shoulder and penetrating deep inflicted a fatal wound.<sup>1</sup> Another student, David de Kirkby, a suspiciously Northern name, after being badly wounded on the back of the head

and in the knee, was killed by a dagger-thrust below the left arm. The extremely loose connection of the undergraduate with the university may be judged by the fact that, though eight persons were found guilty of these deaths, either as principals or accessories, not a single one was apprehended; nothing could be discovered as to their goods or whither they had betaken themselves.

A number of minor points of considerable interest spring out of the records of these instances of violence. It would perhaps be scarcely wise to dwell too much upon the seemingly purposeless and gratuitous character of some of the attacks; there may well have been jealousies or other causes at work of which we know nothing. But it certainly does strike a modern Englishman as strange that in many of the conflicts there does not seem to have been the slightest observance of fair play. One hears much of the lofty ideas of the days of chivalry, and in 1295 the sentiment which we term chivalry was rising to its zenith. Yet according to modern notions anything more absolutely unchivalrous than these attacks of armed parties on unarmed men, anything more dastardly than the way in which a combatant who is knocked down or separated from his side is set upon by three or four persons at once, it would be difficult to imagine. One is struck too, and very strongly, with the nomadic life these students must have led, the ease with which they escaped the officers of the law, the rarity of the cases where it appeared that the officials had discovered any goods of the culprits, the scanty amount of such goods when found, and the complete ignorance that generally prevailed as to the whereabouts of the offenders. In the twenty-two outrages there are at least twenty-five undergraduates and two Masters of Arts concerned,

<sup>1</sup> Robert de Bridlington, the person who fired the fatal shot, is identified by the Warden of Merton with a graduate of the same name who had served as Proctor in 1311, and who afterwards filled various preferments in the dioceses of Lincoln and York.—MEMORIALS OF MERTON COLLEGE, p. 187.

and not improbably several more. Three only of these are recorded as possessing any goods and chattels, and those of the most modest description. An Irish student, with clothes and books to the value of thirteen shillings and elevenpence, comes out at the top of the list; the Master of Arts with the Semitic name had chattels worth nine shillings; while the other Master, John Seton, was the owner of a coverlet, a towel, a sword, and a plate, of the total value of two shillings and sixpence, besides an equity of redemption in a certain book which had been pawned to the custodians of the university chest, a very ordinary transaction.

There remains the cause of these extraordinary outbursts; a moment's reflection will convince us that it was simple enough. The energies, which in our own day find vent in half a dozen forms of athletic exercise, had in the thirteenth century

hardly more than the single outlet of fighting. Men talked of war and sang of it; and the close of the thirteenth century was a period when a succession of fortunate expeditions and a soldierly king had turned men's thoughts more strongly than usual upon the popular topic. The prevailing tone of society must have acted upon the immature lads cooped up in the narrow streets of a crowded city, without, or practically without, books, much as the cheap romances of our own day are believed to affect the office-boy. There were plenty of rogues in the thirteenth century of course, who were able and willing to help the militant student to add practice to theory; and when we recollect that there were no better police than half-a-dozen Dogberries, that the city was unlighted, and that even lads went armed, one no longer has cause to wonder at the insecurity of life in Oxford six hundred years ago.

## THE SWISS INFANTRY.

It is a commonplace of human history that the springs of great movements are generally to be found in some small and isolated territory. Would we know the home of art we must seek it in the scrap of mountainous land, a peninsula of a peninsula, which is called Attica; would we see the first light of the Reformation we must turn to the parish of Lutterworth in the little island of Great Britain; and if we would discover the birthplace of the modern art of war (and this is perhaps the most important of all arts to human kind), we must go to the tiny scrap of country, little more than five and twenty miles square and surrounded on all sides by lakes and mountains, which is called Schwytz. The fact that all Switzerland is called after its name points to Schwytz as the cradle of all that has made the cantons great; and greatness for a nation (and this is truer of no people than of the Swiss) is achieved primarily by the sword.

But how or why Schwytz should have spun, so to speak, out of her own entrails, the web of a tactical system which overwhelmed the hitherto invincible chivalry, transferred the mastership in the battlefield from the horse to the foot, and thereby effected a great revolution throughout all Europe, are singularly difficult questions. It is indeed impossible to trace the growth of the Swiss military power to its beginning. No such difficulty exists in the case of other nations. We can trace the rise of the German and Bohemian military systems, for instance, with comparative certainty to individual men. There

is of course no dearth of Swiss heroes, Tell, Rudolf von Erlach, Arnold von Winkelried, and so forth; but even if Swiss historians could agree (which they cannot) that these warriors enjoyed more than a legendary existence, there is still nothing to show that they initiated a new and original art of war. The result is that the Swiss are generally assumed to have sprung, like Pallas, suddenly and fully armed into military existence, on the day of Morgarten in the year 1315. Machiavelli, anxious to account for so extraordinary a phenomenon, says boldly that the Swiss infantry copied the Macedonian model, but unfortunately omits to explain how a poor community of rude peasants should have known anything about the Macedonian phalanx at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Others dispose of the whole difficulty by pointing out that the Swiss, through their poverty, were unable to keep horses and were therefore obliged to fight on foot; and that they were aided in their struggle against Austria by the ruggedness of their country. But because men are forced to fight on foot it does not follow that they will therefore discover the secret of beating men who fight on horseback; and, so far as the nature of the ground enters into the question, the Swiss fought as well in the plains of Lombardy as among their native mountains.

It is at the same time a mistake to suppose that the Swiss were the only people who had devised infantry-tactics of their own, or that they were the first to overthrow the mailed

chivalry on the open field. The battle of Legnano in 1176, where the Milanese infantry defeated the knights of Emperor Frederick the First, anticipates Morgarten by a hundred and fifty years. At Courtrai, again, in 1302 the artisans of the Flemish towns, armed with short pikes and maces, completely routed the headlong cavalry of France. Moreover England, the most striking example of all, had never permitted her infantry quite to disappear, and was specially enamoured of the practice of dismounting her cavalry for action. Indeed it is never sufficiently appreciated that the British archers, unless supported by battalions of knights on foot, would hardly have sufficed to win their first victory of Crécy. But the Flemish infantry was defeated by the French at Mons-en-Pevele, and utterly crushed by the final French victory at Rosebecque in 1382. The English, though they tried hard to prolong the life of their archery to their great civil war, were forced to abandon it for pike and musket. But the Swiss system endured, and for more than two centuries gave the law to Europe. It was in truth the foundation of all existing European infantry.

Where then the Swiss learned their tactics, or who he was that taught them, are secrets that must remain for ever obscure. One thing alone is certain, that their representative canton, Schwytz, was from its first appearance in history a stubborn and combative community. It was a German colony which upheld its primitive German institutions against the feudalism that threatened it from the North; and above all it enjoyed a permanent quarrel, in consequence of a territorial dispute, with the neighbouring monastery of Einsiedeln. Now this monastery had from very early times received special favour from the

Emperors, with freedom of election for its abbots and immunity from lay jurisdiction at large, and it was to the Emperors that it appealed for defence against the aggression of Schwytz. One would have thought that the Empire would have given short shrift to a petty forest canton, but it was not so. Henry the Fifth in 1114 and Conrad the Third in 1144 both gave judgment for Einsiedeln when the quarrel was referred to them; but neither could enforce his decision on Schwytz. In 1214 the monastery and the canton became so violent in their feud that they burned and ravaged each other's territory for three whole years, until Rudolph of Hapsburg came to mediate between them. Two generations later, on the death of the Emperor Rudolph in 1291, the Schwytzers, defiant of the whole House of Austria, attacked the unhappy monastery again, and brought Duke Albert into the field against them; but the Duke, good soldier though he was, seems to have retired without venturing to risk an action. In 1308, on the death of this Albert, the contest was again revived, and the Schwytzers had yet another opportunity of training themselves in the school of active service. Concurrently with these exploits at home the Swiss had sent a succession of contingents to the aid of the Emperors ever since the twelfth century, while they had given a foretaste of their mercenary as well as of their fighting qualities by taking service with the Abbot of Saint Gall in 1253, and against him in 1262. When therefore the day of Morgarten came in 1315 they were no novices in the business of war.

It was not, however, until Morgarten had been supplemented by Laupen in 1339, and Laupen by Sempach in 1382, that the fame of the Swiss became really exalted in Europe. Even at the latter date, in

spite of strenuous efforts of enthusiasts to prove the contrary, it can hardly be assumed that they had perfected the tactics which distinguished them in the fifteenth century; and indeed the most striking feature in those three early engagements is the extraordinary good luck which they enjoyed through the stupidity of their adversaries. At Laupen the Swiss were little more than five thousand strong, the Bernese, who were the principal combatants, numbering four thousand, and their allies from Uri, Schwytz, Unterwalden, and two other valleys but twelve hundred more. They were drawn up in two great battalions or wedges of unequal size, that on the right being made up of Bernese, and that on the left of their allies; and the whole were posted on rising ground to await attack. The baronial army numbered twenty-four thousand men, twelve hundred of them being cavalry, and was likewise drawn up in two divisions, the cavalry on the right and the infantry on the left. As the mass of the baronial foot advanced, two thousand of the Bernese took to flight without striking a blow; the remainder, to their infinite credit, stood firm until the enemy came close to them and then, after a brief preliminary fire of stones, fell on resolutely with the halberd. The steady advance of the wedge cleft the opposing infantry in twain, and routed it utterly with heavy loss; so that on the right the Swiss success was assured. On the left, however, the battalion of confederates was completely surrounded by the enemy's horse, and, being not yet armed with the long pike, was very hard pressed. The Bernese thereupon rallied and attacked the cavalry, which being thus assailed on both sides, was put to flight after heavy punishment. The Swiss won their victory gallantly and honourably

enough; but it is difficult even for a layman to understand why the baronial commanders did not detach a portion of the cavalry to engage the confederates, and fall with the remainder upon the rear of the Bernese.

Sempach, again, was extraordinarily mismanaged by the Austrians. The scene of action was the level summit of a down, by no means unfavourable ground for the action of cavalry. The Austrian cavalry, fourteen hundred in all, was drawn up in three lines on the slope of the down. The Swiss infantry, of about the same strength, was formed in a single wedge; and it was their task, if they could, to dislodge the enemy from their advantageous position. The sequel would be hardly credible did we not know, by many examples, the shifts to which their commanders were driven by the indiscipline of the knights. Duke Leopold of Austria was completely surprised by the appearance of the Swiss, and either from this cause, or from ill-timed recollection of the English tactics at Crécy, ordered his first line to dismount. They did so; but instead of standing firm they rushed down in disorder to the attack, headed by a number of rash young nobles burning to distinguish themselves in their first action. To do them justice they fought hard, and for a time had the better of their enemy, until the latter brought forward one wing, so to speak, of their wedge, and took them in flank. Duke Leopold then ordered his second line to dismount; but before this lengthy operation was complete and the horses removed, the Swiss had completely broken the first line and could turn all their strength upon the second. The day was intensely hot, and the knights, encumbered by their heavy armour, tired sooner than the Swiss, who, seeing their advantage, pressed



it to the utmost. The third Austrian line still remained mounted, but instead of coming forward basely took to flight; the valets in charge of the horses of the dismounted men fled with them, and the Austrians were simply cut to pieces. Such, stripped of the embroidery added by later generations, legends of Winkelried and so forth, seems to be the story of Sempach, even more discreditable to the Austrians than glorious to the Swiss. One would gladly believe, if it were possible, the theory of a Swiss writer who maintains that the Austrians were surprised during a halt before they had time to mount their chargers.

It will be observed that the tactics of the Swiss in these three engagements of Morgarten, Laupen, and Sempach were not yet those which (as shall presently be seen) they employed with such success in their palmy days of the fifteenth century, nor can it be said even that the weapons were the same. The name of the Swiss is generally identified with the long pike of the eighteen-foot shaft; and most gallant attempts have been made by recent writers to prove that this celebrated weapon was a Swiss invention and employed by the confederates from the first. The point, however, is one that must remain uncertain; for the earliest mention of the long pike is found in an order addressed in 1327 by Count Philip of Savoy to the burghers of Turin, and no one can tell whether the Savoyards borrowed it from the Swiss or the Swiss from the Savoyards. The primitive weapons of all infantry seem to be the spear and shield. The Milanese fought with such spears, or pikes, eight or ten feet in length, at Legnano, the Scotch at Falkirk, and the Flemings at Courtrai; so that it is impossible really to predicate of any one nation that it added the

requisite number of feet to the weapon's shaft in order to make a long pike. There is no mention of pikes in the battles of the Swiss until Sempach, and it is probable that in that action they were not above ten feet in length.

Far more distinctive of the Swiss was the halberd, which was their principal weapon at Morgarten and Laupen. It is curious to note how the Teutonic nations, even to this day, prefer the cut and the Latin nations the point. We have been told by German officers that, when the German and French cavalry met in the war of 1870, the German sword-blades always flashed vertically over their heads while the French darted in and out horizontally in a succession of thrusts. Even the German dead lay in whole ranks with their swords at arm's length. So the English at Hastings worked havoc with their battle-axes; the Netherland mercenaries carried a hewing weapon at Bouvines; the Flemings at Courtrai used their *godendags*, fitted alike both for cut and thrust; and finally the Swiss made play with their halberds, an improvement on the *godendag*. The halberds had a point for thrusting, a hook wherewith to pull men from the saddle, and above all a broad heavy blade, "most terrific weapons (*valde terribilia*)," to use the words of John of Winterthur, "cleaving men asunder like a wedge and cutting them into small pieces." One can imagine how such a blade at the end of an eight-foot shaft must have surprised galloping young gentlemen who thought themselves invulnerable in their armour.

In the matter of missile weapons the Swiss, as the legend of Tell sufficiently shows, favoured the cross-bow; but they also employed the more primitive system of stone-throwing with great effect. They were

carefully trained in this latter practice, and to such purpose, it is said, that they could at twenty yards' range strike a small object with unerring precision. A blow from a stone a pound or two in weight, though rarely fatal, must often have been sufficient to stop a man, if not to slay him; while if it struck a horse full in the face it was pretty certain to make him rear up and become unmanageable. Then came the pikeman's chance to thrust his pike into the poor animal's belly, which done, the nimble halberdier ran up to despatch the fallen knight, and so the division of labour was complete. In due time, of course, the stones and crossbows gave way to fire-arms; but the Swiss were never so famous with the arquebuse as were the Spaniards.

In the fifteenth century the Swiss adopted the system of forming their battalions for action into three divisions; the van (*Vorhut*), the battle (*Schlachthauf*), and the rear (*Hindhut*); an imitation of the prevalent fashion of forming armies for battle in three lines. The rule was that van and rear should each be equal to half the strength of the main body; thus in a regiment of two thousand men van and rear would consist each of five hundred men and the battle of a thousand. These three divisions followed each other in echelon from the right or left. Each of them was formed into a solid square for defence, and into a wedge, or an oblong column, for attack; though in a pitched battle the whole three divisions were sometimes combined into one gigantic mass, in order that the proportion of pikes, which was from one-fourth to one-sixth of the whole, might go further in giving protection against the attack of cavalry. But there was almost invariably an advanced guard of some kind, called the Blood Company (*Blutfahne*) or the

Free Company (*Freiegesellschaft*), being composed of volunteers (*Freiwilligen*), and later on the Lost (*Verlorene*, or *Verlorener Hauf*), from the last of which we English have derived, through the Landsknechts, our expression Forlorn Hope. *Hauf* has of course more to do with *heap* than *hope*; but the sacrifice of accuracy to euphony will in this particular instance be admitted to have its advantages. The French, translating instead of mutilating, called their advanced parties *enfants perdus*.

The discipline of these Swiss bands must have been a doubtful quantity, their history showing a strange mixture of occasional restraint and glaring insubordination. Insomuch as the strength of their massive battalions depended not a little on the proper distribution of the pikes among the halberds, there must have been drill and discipline sufficient to ensure that men should remain in their places. But the probability is that there was considerable difference between the bands of the various cantons. The forest cantons were in their origin practically military republics; their administrators in peace were their leaders in war, and no one who had not approved himself a good captain could hope to hold the highest civil office. Moreover the whole band formed a free assembly, wherein every man had a right to take part alike for debate and for action, subject to the laws of discipline and war. So too the Landsknechts of Swabia carried into their regiments the institutions of the German guild. But the Swiss towns were subjected to a Stadtherr imposed upon them from without, who was often an unpopular man, and hence their discipline was by no means so perfect. It is significant that the towns furnished a larger proportion of pikes to their halberds, for the simple reason that pike-

men were more easily kept under control, for if they left their places in the ranks they were virtually defenceless. A halberdier, on the contrary, could move about and defend himself independently; his weapon was light and handy, and therefore not for an undisciplined man.

It is curious that it was this same quality of handiness that made the halberd the sergeants' weapon. The sergeants, who were generally the only men who knew anything about drill, needed to be eternally running up and down the ranks to put men into their proper places, and hence could not be burdened with a heavy cumbersome pike. So the halberd became the distinction of the sergeant, and as such was promised to Corporal Trim by Uncle Toby himself; indeed, unless we are mistaken, it survived even into the present century. Then it gave place to the sword-bayonet, which compelled sergeants to shoulder arms after a different fashion from privates; and thus it may be said that the traditions of the Swiss survive to this day in Saint James's palace-yard.

For the rest, the Swiss bands marched to the music of fife and drum or of their own voices, the notation of one of their marching-songs being still preserved. The forest cantons also sent a horn with their companies, which instruments were known by nicknames, Bull of Uri, Cow of Unterwalden, and the like. Their sound was long a note of terror to the men of Austria and Burgundy, and made a grand rallying-cry for the Swiss in action. But apart from this these horns appear to be the origin of the bugle-horns which still appear on the appointments of our Light Infantry, and have displaced the drum as the distinctive instrument of the foot-soldier. Each company of course had a flag of its own, which on march or in action was

posted in the centre under a guard of halberds; whence the main body sometimes was called by the name of the Panner (banner). The Swiss were distinguished by the small size of their flags; the Landsknechts, on the contrary, to accentuate the difference between themselves and their hated rivals, carried enormous ensigns, and made great play with them. Other nations chose a happy mean between the two. Uniform was of course a thing virtually unknown in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, though the Swiss, if we are to trust old woodcuts, wore the white cross on a red ground even at Sempach. A cross of some colour was for centuries the only mark employed to distinguish soldiers of different nations in the field. The Flemish towns seem to have been the first to have prescribed a common pattern of dress for their soldiers, which was worn by them at the battle of Courtrai, and, it may have been, still earlier. The first recorded instance of uniform among the Swiss relates to a contingent of Bernese in the year 1365, fifteen hundred strong and all dressed alike. In 1499 the historian Pirckheimer commanded a mixed force of Swiss, horse and foot, who anticipated the English by all wearing red coats; and it is worth remarking that the Swiss regiments in the French service retained the scarlet to the last.

Tracing the progress of the Swiss through their famous campaigns in the defence of their homes and in the service of foreign countries, one is struck chiefly by the extreme aggressiveness of the national character. The military spirit had bitten deeply into them, and the carriage of arms even in time of peace was their rule long before they had made a European reputation. Both before and after Sempach the authorities of various cantons were obliged to prohibit a

prevailing habit of never appearing in the open air without pike, halberd, or crossbow, so murderous were the quarrels thereby kindled. In fact there was remarkably little of the peaceful goatherd in the Swiss of that day ; there was far more of the insolent soldier who cannot endure the tedium of a long peace.

The struggles of the cantons with Austria are commonly spoken of as though she were the aggressor, but Austria had not the slightest wish to quarrel with them. She rather sought their alliance, and it was the Swiss who insisted on following their own wishes by the right of the sword. With victory of course their insolence increased. There are few more striking scenes in history than that of a handful of petty cantons simultaneously pressing the sieges of Zurich and Färnsburg in 1444, and coolly detaching sixteen hundred men to meet fifty thousand French, Germans, English, and Scotch at Saint Jacob-en-Birs. But with insolence insubordination had likewise increased. The sixteen hundred would not be content with the defeat of thousands of French cavalry, and with the capture of banners, horses, guns, stores, and booty. Despite the entreaties of their officers they must needs cross a deep river under a heavy artillery-fire and attack the entire hostile army on the other bank. Even so they fought like tigers, and it was only after ten hours' furious encounter that they were finally annihilated. Ten alone of the sixteen hundred made their escape ; the whole of the remainder lay dead or unconscious on the ground. The chivalry took indeed their revenge ; but they purchased it so dearly that the lesson was soon forgotten by the Swiss.

A generation later the fame of the Swiss rose still higher after the victories of Granson, Morat, and Nancy ;

for it was no small thing to have vanquished such a foe as Charles the Bold of Burgundy. It is singular that so celebrated a soldier as Charles should not have been more wary in attacking the Swiss, but it seems that, in spite of Sempach and all that had happened since Sempach, he still cherished the old false chivalrous contempt for all infantry. He was strangely ignorant too of the customs of the Swiss on the battlefield. When, as usual, they knelt in prayer and kissed the frozen ground before Granson, he fancied that they were begging mercy of him. "By Saint George," he exclaimed, "we shall not take long to destroy these Almain dogs ;" and to do him justice, he did succeed in breaking into a great square of pikes and seizing the banner of Schwytz, though it profited him little. Morat was a greater disaster even than Granson, in spite of the astonishing gallantry of three thousand English, who here took their second lesson from the finest infantry in Europe. Finally came the crowning victory of Nancy and the death of Charles ; after which there was nothing left for the sovereigns of Europe but to train men of their own on the Swiss model. Within the next ten years Louis the Eleventh had created the French, and Maximilian the German infantry ; the former of which was destined to give the Swiss their first wound, and the latter, better known as the famous Landsknechts, to deal them their mortal blow.

But their greatest days were still before them, if mercenary service may be called the greatest. In 1494 came the invasion of Italy by Charles the Eighth, which propagated the gospel of the new art of war all over Europe. It was the mercenary Swiss who terrified Italy into submission by the mere aspect of their battalions, and it

was the Swiss who secured Charles's retreat from Italy at Fornova. In 1499, when a trifling dispute between Chur and the Tyrol dragged the Swiss and Suabians into the complicated Italian struggle, the Confederates turned against their inveterate enemy with all their old fire. The German Landsknechts met them with high-sounding threats of vengeance and destruction, and even taunted them by crawling on all fours and howling like kine; but the Swiss beat them in three successive engagements. The day of the Landsknechts was not yet come. Four years later saw them arrayed against the Spanish infantry under Gonsalvo of Cordova, and beaten back, together with the French whom they served, at Cerignola and the Garigliano; but the Spanish infantry was not yet the model of Europe. Meanwhile the tone of the cantons was high and haughty as ever. In January, 1508, they warned Maximilian, "that if he injured the French king, he would force them to be mindful of their obligations to him;" a direct threat from a power that knew its own strength.

The following year they were fighting for the league of the Emperor, the French King, and the Pope against the Venetians; and on May 14th, 1509, they crushed the military power of Venice for ever at Agnadel. They then quarrelled with the French, or it would be truer to say rendered themselves intolerable to them; for though nominally mercenaries they were really unmanageable allies. In truth their long supremacy on the battle-field had not only ruined them for peaceful occupation, but had begun to destroy their utility even for war. In Switzerland itself the military mania was so strong among them, that the very children turned out with flags, drums, and pikes, and marched in soldier's fashion with military step. Weddings,

fairs, religious festivals, all great occasions alike were celebrated by a review or some other form of military display. But in the field their discipline had suffered, and their insolence had increased, until they were as terrible to friend as to foe. Always covetous and insubordinate, they became more and more inclined to plunder, and to dictate, under threat of mutiny, to the unhappy potentate who had hired them. The year 1512 saw them at the zenith of their power, when waving Austria and France alike away from Milan they installed therein the ruler of their own choice. In the same year they met the Landsknechts at the passage of the Oglio and Ticino, and fording the rivers stark naked beat them back without waiting even to dress themselves. A few months later they showed even more magnificent insolence when besieged by the French in Novara; throwing the gates open they begged the enemy not to be at the pains of making a breach, but to walk straight in: "*Donnez-vous donc la peine d'entrer.*" The French made no reply, except to hammer away with their artillery; whereupon the Swiss mockingly hung the breaches with sheets as sufficient protection against so feeble a foe. Shortly after arrived reinforcements from Switzerland, which, without pausing to rest more than an hour after a long and hurried march, dashed out in disorder against the encompassing troops and dispersed them with terrible loss. "If we could only reckon upon obedience in our men," said the Swiss leaders, "we should march through the whole of France."

But the end was now drawing near. They had fought with France against Venice in 1509, and against the French in alliance with Venice in 1512 and 1513; but at last in 1515, when again allied with the French, they provoked their patience too far.



Two furious days' fighting at Marignano,—such fighting that the veteran Trivulzio declared all other battles to be child's play compared with it—and the complete victory of the French taught the mutinous Swiss a lesson that they did not forget. Their long military connection with France dates from the year 1516 ; for they respected the men who had beaten them. But their insubordination was not yet cured. Seven years later at Bicocca they forced the French commander, Lautrec, into an action against his will. They must have battle or pay, they said, or they would march home ; and they had their way. The Landsknechts and the Spanish arquebusiers killed four thousand out of eight thousand of them, and drove the rest shamefully from the field. From that day their prestige was gone.

Three years later at Pavia these same Landsknechts under the same leader, Georg von Frundsberg, marched across the battle-field eager to meet the Swiss, and for the second time defeated them utterly. On that day the sceptre of the infantry passed to the Landsknechts, and the fame of the Swiss steadily waned. The Germans were both cheaper and more subordinate than they.

Yet for centuries later the Swiss served the French with devotion and gallantry, and it was not until the fatal day at Versailles, August 10th, 1792, that they passed away gloriously from the history of the French army. And so it has come about that the Papal Guards, first instituted by Pope Julius the Second, and beadles in churches still known as Suisses, alone recall the gallant infantry that taught all Europe its greatest lesson in a new art of war.

## THE YAM CUSTOM.

(A TALE OF ASHANTEE.)

KOBGINA was one of the thirteen sons of Koffee Dua, an Ashantee man, by his sixth wife Ajua. I do not mean that Ajua was his sixth spouse in succession; she held that rank in seniority, the other five being all there, grinding corn and pounding plantains in Koffee's compound at Coomassie. Kobbina was a fine, broad-shouldered young fellow, with clean lithe limbs and the somewhat pointed skull of the Ashantee. He was nineteen, and he wanted a wife; but he had no money to get one.

The Dua family was large. Koffee's wives had been prolific, and his compound was quite a small village. Three and twenty sons there were and thirteen daughters, and all of high degree. For Koffee, being one of the seventy-three sons of King Koffee Kallalli, was a Prince of Ashantee; at least he would have been called a prince in England by those dear lion-hunting ladies, who believe everything that a black man likes to tell them. And Koffee, besides being of royal blood, was a crier of the King's court at Coomassie. He went about with his badge hanging on his breast, a plate of gold curiously chased and surrounded by a fringe of black monkey hair; this and a large red cloth made up his costume. A West African King's court-crier shouts his master's titles on state-occasions, and is sometimes trusted with secret missions. If he prove himself a plausible liar,—I should say a skilful diplomatist—he becomes a High Ambassador.

Koffee had a little judicial court of his own in Coomassie, where he dis-

pensed injustice to the side which paid him least. Though dishonest, he was poor, because he could not find enough people to come before him to be fleeced.

Kobbina's love was a daughter of Mensa Prempe, the goldsmith who lives in the big square where the bamboos are. At all events she was treated as his daughter, though Mrs. Prempe (who had been strangled in the market-place some years ago by the public executioner) had not borne the best of characters. Prempe was a rich man: he put a lot of brass in the gold ornaments that he made; and as Bembe was fat and round, and people did not tell many stories about her, he fixed her head-money at four cows, two cases of gin, and a great lot of the blue beads that were in fashion just then.

Kobbina was in despair, for he had nothing in the world but an old flint-lock gun, with a barrel of gas-piping, and the cloth he wore. And the cloth too, was a small one; you could have cut him a complete suit out of a lady's kerchief. It would have been a pity if he had bothered himself with more clothes, for though his face was not much to look at, his body was beautiful. He might have been carved by Praxiteles out of black marble; such straight firm legs he had, such a clean flank, and broad flat shoulders. Being a son of Koffee Dua, he could not work. The whole family only owned seven slaves, and these were old and thin. Last year they had had ten, but Kobbina's reputed grandfather had died of "Guinea-worm,"

and three of the most weak-kneed chattels had been sacrificed on the grave, to keep up the dignity of the family. The Duas lived in genteel indigence, and Kobbina, when he was not out shooting monkeys or trapping leopards, sat on his haunches at home in the cool shade of an oil-palm and swallowed the dollops of boiled plantain which the females of the family pounded for him and the other males.

One day he saw Bembe. She was being promenaded round Coomassie with a lot of heavy gold ornaments on her head, and there were streaks of yellow clay on her face and bosom as a sign that she was of marriageable age. When Bembe passed by Kobbina, who was sprawling in the sun by the side of the Fetish house, her soft black eyes met his. She smiled shyly for an instant, yet cunningly withal, and bending her gaze coyly to the ground, she passed along with the other women and slaves who droned a monotonous love-chant.

Then Kobbina languidly stretched himself along the warm ground on which he was lying and felt he ought to have a wife. He thought it was high time, and concluded he would like to have Bembe, whose limbs were soft and round and whose eyes were black as sloes. Forthwith he went to Prempe to know how much the head-money would be. He argued and bargained, but no lower than three cows and a goat, besides the gin and the beads, would the goldsmith go. Furthermore, he sneered at Kobbina's pretensions, for the penury of the Dua family was common talk in Coomassie. But Kobbina, who was nineteen, pressed and promised until, for sheer weariness, the old man consented to wait three moons for the marriage gifts.

Bembe was not asked for her opinion in the matter. The girls of Ashantee are not supposed to know what is good

for them, and marriages are made in the French fashion. But Kobbina met her one evening, in the shadow of the plantain patch which flourished in the dirt behind her father's house, and they said a lot of things to each other. Then Kobbina, when the girl had disappeared in the gloom, wondered where he was going to get the head-money from. He had no slave to sell, nor child to put in pawn. He pondered for several days, and while he dreamed and calculated, in spite of family opposition he set to work. He cleared a little patch of the forest growth, where Bembe, when she became his wife, might sow guinea-corn, plant yams, and work herself to death for the ease of her lord and master. When her hands became hard with corns and cracks, and her round limbs knotted and gnarled under the cruel labour, Kobbina would be able to have another wife, bought by the sweat of poor Bembe's brow; for so the world wags in Ashantee. He also took his long flint-lock gun with the crooked barrel that shot round corners, and forth he sallied into the deep bush to war on the poor monkeys, whose long silky coats bring a dollar apiece in the factories on the Coast. In the deep twilight of the forest, his lithe body wound like a snake through the creeping lianes, and many a hapless monkey's dying yell echoed to the bark of Kobbina's shooting-iron. At last he sounded a truce. The black skins, which he had pegged out in long rows to dry in the sun, crackled like parchment, and a goodly load they made. He bade good-bye to Bembe in the plantain patch and swore a Fetish oath that Coomassie would see him back before two moons had waxed and waned.

Six days later, two men with shaven skulls and evil faces crouched

behind a clump of cactus that bordered a bush-path. That was the road which leads from Coomassie to the great coast-town where the white factors barter rotten cotton and sandy gunpowder for the palm oil, full of clay, and the rubber, mixed with stones, which the simple savage brings down from the interior. It was night, but a moon of ten days' growth shed sufficient light to show the watchers a long stretch of the path that ran between the two thick walls of bush.

If you had been in West Africa you might have known by the three long cuts on their cheeks, from the eyes to the mouth, that the two watchers were Donko men. They wore dark gray cloths, and while they watched, they drew the rags closer round them, for the dew was chill and heavy. This was the second night of their vigil, and every time they peered through the narrow spaces in the cactus, they grunted guttural words of disappointment. They wanted a man, not two men or three or a crowd, but a solitary man; and through the long hours of the night they watched and waited. One of the men had unwound from his waist a long piece of dull brown cotton cloth, and it lay like a snake on the ground beside him. The air was humming with the myriads of creeping, crawling, flying things which the tropic night seems to call suddenly into life, and the cry of the night-jar echoed mournfully at intervals in the branches of a great silk-cotton tree,—the abode of African ghosts and devils.

Suddenly, the two men raised themselves on their knees, and their black eyes gleamed as they peered up the path through the arms of the cactus clump. There was the crackle of a breaking twig, the rustle of something brushing past the bushes, and a solitary man

appeared walking with springy step down the track. The moon shone full upon him, and a squat black shadow dogged his footsteps. There was a load upon his head, but the fifty monkey-skins were but a feather-weight to the firm round neck that carried them. A hundred and twenty miles had Kobbina tramped since he had said good-bye to Bembe in the plantain patch, and he had covered the distance in five nights, sleeping during the steamy days under the umbrella trees in the villages on the road. He travelled alone, spoke to no one, and shunned the companionship of the slaves and petty traders who passed him on their way to the factories on the Coast. For he was the thirteenth son of Koffee Dua, the court-crier, who was the fifty-second son of King Koffee Kalcalli, and honest labour is a disgrace to the blood-royal of Coomassie. He beguiled the way with the calculations of Lafontaine's farmer-wench, who saw in the pail of milk upon her head, eggs, chickens, a cow, a dress, and a husband. Fifty monkey-skins Kobbina counted to be worth just fifty dollars. Eleven shillings and sixpence would he give for two cases of the poisonous gin that delighted the heart and burned the gullet of Bembe's father: four and twenty shillings should be invested in the fashionable bright blue beads; and with the remainder of the money, if the factor did not cheat him too much with his Ready-reckoner, he might get enough striped cotton cloths to buy the three cows that the goldsmith wanted. There might even be something over for a velvet cloth for Bembe and a good drink of rum for himself. The moonbeams that filtered through the leaves glinted on the polished smoothness of his skin, and there was a spark of love-light in his eyes as he thought of Bembe in Coomassie.

Nearer and nearer he came to the cactus clump, while on the other side of it the two men with the shaven skulls and gashed cheeks, waited and held their breaths. Softly humming an Ashantee love-song he picked his way among the little stones that cast their violet shadows in the moonlight. Right in front of the cactus clump there was a deep black patch on the path, cast by the crest of a fan-palm overhead, whose giant leaves rustled and creaked with a sound like human moans. He stepped into the blot of shade, and like a huge ape one of the watchers leaped out behind him. A stiff grip was on his neck, a knee on his backbone, and the falling load upon his head overthrew his balance. Throwing out his arms in a vain endeavour to save himself, Kobbina fell upon his face, and before he could even utter a yell, the second man was on him and the dull brown cloth was tightly wrapped around his head. Struggling, writhing, and twisting on the ground, he lay at the mercy of his captors. One of the Donkos placed his knee upon the neck, while the other, in spite of all his struggles, swiftly bound the hands and feet of the hapless Ashantee. Long ropes of stringy vines, cut from the sides of the path, were wound round and round his body till they cut so deep into his flesh that every movement was a torture. His stifled shouts did naught but startle, for an instant, the noisy insects in the bushes; and the bare-skulled man-hunters grinned with satisfaction at the neatness of their work.

Three nights later there was stirring commotion in the big town on the Coast. It was the celebration of the Yam Custom. The first young yams of the season had been cut that morning in the plantations, amid the songs and dances of the white-robed

Fetish priests. Long processions of yelling blacks had borne the first fruits to the shrine of Sasabonsam, and the beating of many tom-toms and the blare of ivory horns sounded through the land. The whole town was in a tumult, and every one was more or less drunk. It is a British Colony, and His Excellency the Governor had taken all sorts of precautions to see that the great festival should be celebrated with no more disorder than was usual, and had worried the unfortunate District Commissioner nearly to death with orders and counter-orders. In the bad old days the celebration of the Yam Custom, in any town that respected itself, was voted a very poor affair if less than a hundred unfortunate natives had their heads hacked off by the three-bladed swords of the Fetish executioners. But the strong rule of Her Majesty is spoiling all the fun now, and the sacrifices, which are absolutely necessary to avert from the tribes plague, pestilence, battle, and murder, have now to be despatched with so much trouble and secrecy that they make no show at all and are scarcely worth the risk.

It takes a deal of strong liquor to fuddle a black man, and the rum-sellers were joyously raking in the coins and the cowries, while the casks in their little dens trickled fire-water like unplugged leaks. The dark alleys between the mud huts were full of reeling negroes, who jostled and pushed each other as they shouted the obscene Fetish songs that are pæans of joy over a well-filled belly: women with ragged breasts and gnarled limbs danced the hip-dances of West Africa with hideous contortions and monotonous drone; while a sour reek of smoke, rum, and dirt fouled the night air.

In the centre of the town, where the low-thatched huts are crowded together most thickly, lies the King's



quarter. The palace is no better than the meanest hovel around, and only the number of its dingy huts and squalid courtyards gives it a dignity above the surrounding dens. One of the main thoroughfares of the town passes right through this quarter, but high mud walls, placed one before the other, shut off this little ditch of semi-civilisation as completely as if it were miles away.

In the innermost court, hedged by the highest walls, a dozen men sat in solemn conclave. In the centre a blazing fire of palm-kernels threw a yellow glow on the forms of those grouped around. They were mostly old men, whose black, bald skulls invested them with a certain air of respectability. Some sat on the quaintly-carved stools of Ashantee, and wore great pieces of velvet and brocade thrown around them like a Roman toga. Those were the chiefs and war-captains of the King, and the scars which you might see on those parts of their legs and chests that were uncovered told of glorious fights in the days when the white men were only traders and did not bother themselves about what happened outside the walls of their forts and factories. Conspicuous in the group were three high-priests of Fetish. Their plain white cloths, wrapped round and round them like shrouds, gleamed in a startling manner in the surrounding colour, while their baleful appearance was not relieved by the black and white beads hanging round their necks, or by the streaks of yellow clay drawn in geometrical designs on their sardonic visages. In the centre of the group sat the King. A fat, besotted-looking boy, scarcely out of his teens, bedizened with strings of gold nuggets, and clad in a gorgeous length of brocade. With his elbows resting on his knees and his chin upon his thumbs, he crouched rather than sat on a low Ashantee

stool, and stared vacantly into the glowing embers at his feet. One of the Fetish priests was speaking. His gaunt form stood out beside the fire, and the lambent flames threw tawny lights on his features. He was excited, and the guttural words fell from his lips in an impassioned flow. He gesticulated much with his thin black arms, and while his excited accents rose and fell on the night air, his eyes unswervingly fixed themselves on the hesitating King.

In a corner of the court, half hidden by the gloom of a thatched roof that projected far beyond the walls, stood Kobbina Dua. His bonds had been loosed sufficiently to allow him to stand; a piece of wood was pressed between his teeth and tightly fastened behind his head, so that a stifled gurgle was all that he could utter. A deep sigh sometimes escaped him, but his eyes, humid with tears of rage, flashed defiance at the group around the fire, and especially at the white-robed speaker.

The Fetish priest continued his address in a voice that seemed to hiss around the embers: "Oh King, why are you so afeared this season? Twelve moons ago, when the first young yam was shown to the sun, you hesitated not to offer to Bonsam the gift of gratitude that he demanded. A paltry gift it was, alas! a wretched Donko slave, palsied with age and crooked in the back. Nevertheless, his thin neck gaped under the sacred knife and the red blood ran on the very spot where now you sit. Your gold-studded stool was washed in the sacrifice, and the spirits spared us for a while. But this season they are wroth indeed, and their mighty anger is kindled against our tribe. I hear them calling for blood: my brothers have heard them also; and mark me, woe, pestilence and famine will be our lot if this Yam Custom

pass away without a proper offering to Bonsam. I know, oh King, that you have given seven of your goats to Kataori, that their blood may be seen on the doorposts of this town ; but my heart shrivels within me at the thought of such a paltry offering. What fear you, Manche ? You know full well that though all the tribe shall hear that honour has been done to Bonsam this night, yet not a whisper shall reach the ears of the cursed Police-fo who dare to interfere with Kataori. The arm of Fetish has more hands than there are stars in the sky, and its fingers are as the sands of the sea. Fear not, I say, Manche ! No rain have we had since three moons have grown and dwindled, and I smell the spotted sickness in the air. The wrath of the spirits is ready to burst upon us like the thunder-cloud of a tornado. You can avert it, King, by a ready sacrifice. He is here ! Bonsam wants his blood, and yet you hesitate ! ” And the priest of Fetish glared at the captive in the corner with eyes that gleamed with a tiger’s lust for blood.

The King thus adjured, roused himself from his lethargy, and drawing his brocade about his shoulders as if he felt a chill, muttered something to the chief who sat beside him. The silence of suspense fell upon the group and many eyes were turned on the Ashantee, whose sturdy limbs were now and then illuminated by the flames that shot up in the acrid smoke. Brave though he was, Kobbina’s heart beat fast while the King whispered with the chief. He heard the rumble of wheels in the street, just a few yards away from him, but the high mud walls and outer alleys hedged the inner courtyard as securely as if it had been miles away in the bush. Nearer and nearer came the wheels, but the stick between his teeth turned his ringing yell

into a smothered gurgle, and the sound of salvation died away in the distance. It was Morton, the Inspector of Police, driving up to Government House in one of the heavy rickshaws used by Her Majesty’s officials in West Africa. He was going to dine with the Governor, and would tell His Excellency that all proper precautions had been taken for preventing disturbances during the Yam Custom, and that, barring an increased number of drunken natives in the streets, the town was quiet and orderly as usual.

The sound of the wheels had also been heard by the group around the fire, and had reminded them that, though the anger of Bonsam must be stayed, there was also the wrath of the white Governor to be averted ; and they remembered the hanging of four Fetish priests some months before for the sacrifice of three Juabins in Krobo. For over an hour they deliberated and argued. The three priests urged that the victim should be sacrificed there and then in the court in the same way as the Donko has been offered to Bonsam the year before, and they twitted the King unmercifully on his timidity, threatening him and his with all kinds of terrors if the gods were not propitiated in a fitting manner. The war-chiefs, however, though eager enough to have the annual sacrifice, were not inspired by the degree of fanaticism which rendered the excited priests oblivious to consequences, and most of them were in favour of a more prudent course.

Gradually, the penetrating hum of the crowded town dwindled and sank. The fumes of evil spirits were doing their work, and the huts and alleys were full of snoring negroes grunting and sighing in their besotted sleep. Now and then a quavering shout would echo over the mud walls, while

still the group in the King's courtyard argued and hesitated.

Two hours later the bell in the fort, where the convicts slept, struck thrice. The moon was slowly sinking behind a bank of clouds on the horizon, throwing a silver sheen on the unruffled waters of the Gulf of Guinea. The sea was like glass, and about a mile from the low-lying shore a canoe rose and fell on the lazy roll of the ground swell. It made no progress and was the centre of a solitude. A tall man robed in white, with a string of human teeth about his neck, sat in the stern, and with a leaf-shaped paddle kept the canoe from drifting toward the shore. In the middle of the craft two men crouched over a naked body stretched between them. Their long white robes were tied around their waists, leaving their chests and arms bare to the moonbeams that played on the oily waters. Their bodies swayed to and fro in a slow rhythm, as a hooded cobra sways under the music of the charmer, and they moaned, rather than sang, a Fetish dirge that hummed over the sea like a wail of inexpressible agony. The body that lay between them still throbbed with the full pulses of life. Fathoms of rough-made rope were coiled around the sturdy limbs, rendering the slightest movement impossible. The stick was still between his teeth and beads of cold sweat pearled on the brow of the hapless Ashantee. His eyeballs were all that he could move, and as they restlessly rolled from side to side, they shot gleams of hate and rage and agony so vivid that the

whole vitality of the body seemed concentrated in them. During the pitiless dirge he thought of Coomassie, of little Bembe, and of the plantain patch behind the goldsmith's house, and then he glared at the crouching priests and longed to tear their hearts out of their breasts. In his impotent agony he moaned unconsciously and seemed to give a keynote to the Fetish wail.

Suddenly the chant ceased, and a dread silence fell like a pall over the canoe. The two robed men, moving stealthily in the unsteady craft, laid hands on their victim, and they haled him out sideways till the back of his neck rested on the gunwale. The moonbeams flashed right into the staring eyes of the victim, a keen-edged knife of flint was poised for an instant in the air, the three priests of Fetish screamed a word of dread intent, and the head fell yet further back towards the placid waves. ✓

His Excellency the Governor, in a despatch, number 493 of the 20th of August, to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, was glad to be able to report to His Lordship that "the celebration of the Yam Custom, which in former years was attended by many atrocities, has just been observed in a very orderly manner, and there is every reason to believe that civilisation is making marked progress among the tribes of the Coast, while the gross superstitions of Fetishism are rapidly losing ground under the teaching of the missionaries of various denominations."

## STAGE-STRUCK.

Miss Morleena de Millefleurs.  
Undertakes Business,  
Comedy Old Women, Heavies.  
The Delight of the Intelligent Pit.  
On Tour till September.

Dainty Little Dora,  
Principal Boy. Disengaged for Panto.  
She wears a Sporting Tie.  
All Business for Dora must be addressed,  
103, Rosemary Lane, Brixton.

The Up-to-Date Girl,  
Molly O'Brien.  
The Margate "Hoop-La" dancer.  
The Finest High-Kicker Ever Seen,  
Going Immense.  
She Will Show 'Em a Little Life.  
Resting 40, Portobello Road East,  
With Mother.

I WAS beguiling the way in an omnibus last Christmas by reading the above and kindred advertisements in THE ERA (I always take in THE ERA for old associations' sake), when, at the corner of Bow Street, a young woman jumped in; a young woman, one would have said, of the respectable dressmaker's type, habited sedately almost to primness in a neat ulster (it was raining) and a close bonnet and veil. Presently she recognised a friend opposite her, a woman with a baby and a plush mantle. "I've got it, dearie!" she cried, her face beaming with joy.

"What have you got, sweetie?" asked the friend.

"I've got what I wanted. He's made me a thief!" Everybody in the omnibus started; but the young woman went on: "I told 'im I'd give 'im no peace, and as I'd made up my mind to come back an' back, till he give me somethin'. And so 'e's give in, dearie, and I'm one of the Forty Thieves at thirty shillin' a week!"

A light broke in upon us; it was the Christmas Pantomime. But any one less like one of the Forty Thieves than the neat young woman beside me could hardly be imagined.

But how stupid it was of me not to have guessed who my friends were before! The *dearie* and the *sweetie* ought to have told me at once. Ladies of the profession invariably use these endearments, and very little they sometimes mean. I speak from experience, for it was once my privilege, for the space of a year, to join a company of strolling players. For a time it was advisable that I should earn my living, and the stage seemed to be the most attractive means of earning it. My expectations on this point were, I may now say, not entirely realised; but at the time I assuredly intended that they should be. I had recited and acted at school, and the girls had always applauded my efforts. Being a successfully revolted daughter, I had not much difficulty in getting my own way. I did not change my name and I put no advertisement into the theatrical papers. I got, somehow, an introduction to a provincial manager, who after some demur agreed to take me, at a nominal salary at first. Then I had to provide a wardrobe. To this end a friend who was in the profession took me in hand, and together we visited many cheap sales, and all sorts of curious haunts and bye-ways off the Strand. The first thing we did was to buy large quantities of sham jewellery and beads in Bow Street; I had no idea before that sham jewellery was so indispensable an adjunct of the actor's art. One of my parts, I remember, was to be a Rebel Queen;

a queen with little to do or say, but still a queen. To denote sovereignty my friend persisted in adorning me with brass curtain-fasteners, "bosses," and mock pearls, till I must have resembled Mrs. Merdle's jewel-stand. For another dress she insisted on decorating me with stiff white satin rosettes. "It will give the dress character" she said approvingly; and certainly if character in costume depends on rosettes, my dress, when finished, must have been a part in itself. Then we laid in many pounds of coloured glass bugles, and a conservatory-full of the very cheapest kind of artificial flowers, which were to fill any blanks that might occur in the bugles and the rosettes. Next we bought several wigs of divers colours, and made a visit to a select and mysterious female pawnbroker who lived up many winding stairs, somewhere, I think, among "the dusty purlieus of the Law." This lady appeared to buy wholesale from the aristocracy, or, rather, from their maids, and retail at half-price. She seemed to do an uncommonly good business. Her room was lined with closely-filled chests; some of the dresses were hardly worn, and all extremely elaborate.

"You're just exactly the build of the Countess of X." said this lady to me with a persuasive smile. "'Ere's a box full of her dresses. I think she's per'aps too fond of trimmin' to suit you altogether, but we can alter that a bit."

I was exactly "the build" of the Countess of X. and we soon arranged matters. Just as I was going, the lady turned to me, and said amiably: "Been in the perfession long? No? I thought not. Well, I've got a son in it; he does comic songs and dances, the variety line, y'know. I thought per'aps you might come across him; you'd be sure to git on together if you *did* 'appen to meet!"

If bugles, and rosettes, and mock jewellery could have made me succeed, I ought to have made a great actress; and yet I must confess at once, to my shame, that I never rose to any real eminence in the profession; my name was never "starred" in the bills. However, in spite of this (or perhaps I may say for that very reason, such is human nature) I was beloved by all.

Our first tour was to last four months, from August till Christmas. Our company, to whom I was introduced on the road, were very friendly. All the ladies travelled together, and all the men by themselves; and our train was duly labelled "The Happy Family Company," which I thought very grand indeed, until I met many other trains similarly labelled. We carried scenery and all with us, for ours was a *répertoire* company; that is to say, we played different pieces every night. Our leading lady was Agneta Delaval, an experienced provincial actress of some personal attractions, capable but feline. Then there was Aurelia de Vere (Mrs. Brooks) whose husband was in the company, and who did "second lead" and *ingénue* parts, and was always a little treacherously sweet; and Natalie Brydges, a girl of some ability and of an amiable disposition, but sleepy and with a bad habit of being late for everything; Alice Browne, who played attendants, maids, and anything in that line; and Lilian Evans, a girl of twenty, like myself a novice, very pretty and very ambitious; poor girl, there were many troubles in store for her, before her ambition was to be satisfied. Then there was Nancy Davis (or "Hop o' my Thumb," as we called her, because she was so small), a versatile and clever little person, who did any and every part that might happen to be called for, from a fairy to a page-boy; and there



was Miss de Montmorency, who on the other hand couldn't act at all, but stood about gracefully in Greek attitudes, and was generally troublesome and emancipated. Dick Wilder was our Manager; we always called him Dick among ourselves, and were generally, except when things upset him very much, and he was driven to bad language, on the best of terms with him. The *jeune premier* was Mr. Evelyn de Lisle, a gentleman who also has now risen high in the profession. Mr. de Lisle had the good fortune to be beloved by all the ladies of the company from Miss Delaval to the dresser, nay, even by the very charwomen who cleaned the theatres. Natalie Brydges did indeed pretend indifference, but she was known to be eccentric; and besides, nobody believed her. Mr. de Lisle had, it was said, great charm of manner; the charm consisted in his absolute want of manner. Like Mr. Rochester he was entirely forgetful of other existences but his own, and, figuratively, was much given to wiping his boots on his adorers' dresses. Every one of us quarrelled as to who should arrange his Greek drapery; and he used to come as naturally to us to have his arms powdered for Coriolanus as a child to its mother. Tony Blenkins, on the other hand, was not so much adored. He meant well, but was one of the sort who can never speak to a girl without taking her hand, or putting an arm round her waist. I myself always preferred Tony when he was made up for a villain,—say for Shylock. Then there were Scroggins and Martin, who were middle-aged and oppressed by the cares, or at any rate by the consciousness, of large and expensive families at home; and there was Willie Fleming, who did weak-kneed Roman soldiers, gaolers, and “the third son of old Sir Roland”; I have always wondered, by the way,

why that member of Sir Roland's household should bear so little resemblance to the rest of the family, being generally feeble in the legs and husky. Willie Fleming always gave me the impression of having been sent on to the stage by a well-directed kick from the wings. Finally, there was Billy Barlow, a boy of eighteen, who did “third Murderers,” footmen, and “the mob,” and who, like the celebrated Mrs. Grudden, appeared in the playbills under any and every name that occurred to the Manager as looking well in print. I have myself seen Billy act under six different aliases.

I lived, on tour, conjointly with Lilian Evans and Natalie Brydges, and our board and lodging came to about fifteen shillings a week each. It is almost impossible to live cheaper than that. Our salaries only ran to about thirty shillings each; so that, though our travelling expenses were of course paid by the Management, we did not save much. Mr. Evelyn de Lisle, it was well known, lived always at smart hotels; but we could not all be so grand, and most of the company, ourselves included, frequented dingy lodgings down suicidal streets, lodgings that were let to professionals all the year round, with furniture that shed its stuffing, chimneys that smoked, and other drawbacks.

Landladies, that is to say, theatrical landladies, are a study in themselves. The worst type of them may be perhaps dilapidated and addicted to drink; but the best are delightfully original people, with a great turn for dramatic narrative. Their parlours are generally decorated with photographs, in costume, of the Margate High-Kicker, the Ten Little Niggers, and other ornaments of the profession. They live, indeed, in rather melancholy streets: in one town we were just under a railway-arch, in

another over a mews, and in a third next door to a public-house, whose wooden spirit-cases, piled in a vast heap, nearly blocked up our entrance; but they are always ready to enliven you by their conversation, and two attentions, at least, they never omit; one is, to bring a cup of tea to your bedside in the morning, the other to fetch the beer from the public-house at night. So well have they become inured to the wants of the profession! Then the Visitor's Book, a black, commercial-looking volume, filled with large sprawling entries, is a constant joy. On one page you read that "Long Harry, bright Gracie, and little Vick found this house a home." Who was little Vick, the poodle, or the baby? Perhaps a second Infant Phenomenon. Then, "The Three Slashers found Mrs. G.'s grub excellent." Again, "The Rowdy-Dowdy Swells found this house a Home from Home, and count the landlady and her family among the dearest of their friends." "Which I can't return, axin' their parding," said the landlady on my enquiries; "for the Rowdy-Dowdy Swells,—you've come across 'em per'aps? Well, they're in the nigger line, and of all the dirtiest, noisiest fellers as ever I see,—but there, I always say, I don't 'old with taking niggers in, for it takes pretty nigh all they pay to wash after 'em,—a-dirtyin' all the sheets and a-muckin' everything up with their 'orrid blackin'."

"Found this house a Home from Home"; this was the entry that occurred most frequently, and aroused my curiosity. "What does it mean?" I asked Natalie, who was well versed in theatrical ways. "Oh, it means that the landlady and her children come and sit with you all day, and treat you as one of themselves." It need hardly be added that after this information I carefully abstained from finding any lodging "a Home from

Home." Once indeed, when lodging alone, I had gently but firmly to decline the landlady's suggestion that I should share the parlour with a theatrical gentleman in the music-hall line, just to make it homelier-like for us both. But I was generally on very good terms with my landladies; one, a dear old lady, was much afflicted at the idea of such young girls as Lilian and myself going on the stage. "Do'ee leave that temptatious perfession," she would say, "there's dears; now do'ee. You'd far better marry; now ain't there any one as you might fix your minds on?"

The first regular rehearsal awed me mightily. It took me some time to get accustomed to the dim, religious light that only half disclosed the dirty theatre, with the company sitting or standing about, in costumes of varying dinginess, nibbling macaroons or sandwiches. The auditorium was shrouded in darkness; in front of the stage, near the footlights (only no footlights were lit), sat Dick Wilder, prompt-book in hand, and a kind of seven-branched candlestick flaming behind him, vaguely suggesting an altar. The whole impression was so church-like that I quite expected to hear the organ strike up. Near Wilder stood his secretary, a beardless youth but armed with stern authority, who repeated everything Wilder said in stentorian tones, just as the man with the wooden leg did for Mr. Creakle. How alarming it all was at first! We poor trembling wretches who were novices had to act our parts each time, while our more experienced companions simply raced through their speeches. After a while I learned that provincial rehearsals are much more hap-hazard affairs than London ones, to which they bear much the same relation that a sketch does to a finished picture. In the provinces a play is rehearsed perhaps for a week,

where six weeks would be required in town. Sometimes, indeed, when pressed for time, Wilder would give us only one day for rehearsal; one long day, sustained only by, perhaps, if we were lucky, a stale Bath bun! And the Provinces have a quite different taste in acting from the Town. They like both their sentiments and their style to be somewhat exuberant. "Keep it up!" Wilder used to cry. "Give it out; let 'em have it!" His great horror was always lest a scene should be "let down." Sheer physical force, indeed, was often needed to keep up a scene properly. I remember being cast in one play for the messenger who announces bad news, and my entrance was to bring down the curtain. Mr. de Lisle was playing the hero, and on one occasion, when my voice gave out slightly, he declared bitterly that I had "let the scene down," and lost him "three rounds at least!" Actors and actresses are extremely sensitive on the subject of these "rounds." It might be supposed, by the uninitiated, that one "call" after the scene would be enough; but no, they count eagerly the number of times the curtain is raised, and sometimes as many as six or even eight calls hardly content them!

My first important part was Jessica in *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE*. I was deadly nervous; my hands seemed swelled to twice their usual size with the heat and excitement, the paint would hardly stay on my face, and my throat grew curiously dry and husky. Waiting for your cue at the wings, when you are still a novice, is not unlike the uncomfortable feeling you experience when your bathing-machine is being slowly dragged over the grating shingle to the sea, and you sit shivering, in very inadequate garments, inside. "I can't do it!" I groaned to my Lorenzo who happened on this occasion to be Tony.

"Rubbish," he cried angrily, "buck up!" Tony was usually polite almost to unctuousness; but I never loved him so much as at this moment. He restored my sinking courage, and I actually got a "round"!

Our company was a perfect School for Scandal in the way of gossip. If, under the strictest vows of secrecy, I breathed a word to Natalie or to Lilian I was sure to hear of it again next day from Wilder, or from Hoppy, as we abbreviated Hop o' my Thumb. There were occasional spars and jealousies; but, whatever might be said in private, we were usually to outward view most polite and affectionate. There is said to be much insincerity about the stage, but it is so pleasant to be insincere.

"I never myself believe in a woman who calls you 'dear heart' in the first week," said Hoppy, and I think she was right. Agneta Delaval and Aurelia de Vere (otherwise Mrs. Brooks) made themselves very sweet to Lilian and me at first; but as we began to get on, when Mr. de Lisle asked Lilian to pin on his Greek drapery, above all when Wilder set her to understudy Aurelia's parts, they changed their tone. Lilian was really made quite miserable. Aurelia and Agneta used to bully her terribly; they did not so much speak *to* her as *at* her (and she had to dress with them too, poor thing!), till I've often seen the tears making pathways down the rouge on her cheeks between the acts. Men are never so odious to one another as women are; they have not such petty ways of bullying; if they quarrel, they give one another a black eye and have done with it. Of course Mrs. Brooks must have known she couldn't play Juvenile Leads for ever. Now, I believe, she plays the Nurse in *ROMEO AND JULIET*, the landladies in farces, or anything else that comes handy; but she used to

give Lilian a very bad time of it then. Mr. de Lisle said it was a shame ; but he didn't know how bad it was. When you're dressing in the same room with other girls, you can't get away from their tongues.

We were all very proud of our company, which we justly considered very superior to any other, certainly to those we met with on the road. Terrible caravans they were of painted and touzled females with festoons of yellow hair hanging down their backs ; depressing trainfuls of frowsy humanity, labelled, as the case might be, *The Scarlet Sin Company*, *The Blood-Trail Company*, or *The Human Vampire Company*, with dirty children yelling out of the carriage-windows. You could, by the way, always gather the social status of a company by the number of children it carried in its van. Wilder would never allow a lot of children ; he said it made a company look squalid. We only had one infant in ours, the property of Agneta Delaval, whose husband was touring in another company, and whose real name was Kate Smith ; it was only seen on Sunday journeys with a nurse-girl and a dirty white pelisse, and was carefully kept out of Wilder's way. But it was, I remember, once brought on as the infant in a modern comedy. This struck Wilder as a good opportunity for realism ; but the baby infuriated Mr. de Lisle, who was its stage-parent, by yelling at a pathetic moment and making the gallery laugh. Indeed, so angry was Mr. Evelyn that he completely forgot his part (dried up, as they say in the profession) ; and this was therefore little Miss Smith's first and only appearance. "Why didn't you pick up the brat and stop its crying?" said Wilder angrily to Evelyn. "You engaged me to act ; you didn't engage me as nurse," retorted Evelyn. "Turn on the moon!" bawled the stage-

manager to end the discussion ; for a moonlight scene came next, and the quarrel was delaying the play.

Hop-o'-my-Thumb was at first very friendly with Lilian and myself ; but she gradually espoused the side of Aurelia and Agneta, the side of superior strength. Hoppy had a great sense of what was fair, and it hurt her feelings that a mere novice should get parts denied to a professional of long standing ; she had begun her theatrical career at eight weeks old, as stage-infant in very superior melodrama. She had been born and lived in the profession, which perhaps accounted for her diminutive size. So Hoppy changed sides, and came to regard us with more or less embittered feelings. What nursed the spark almost into a blaze was the fact that at one town Lilian Evans's name had by some oversight been what is called "starred" in the bills. Now, starring is almost invisible to any but professionally jealous eyes, as it only means that the name of the actor or actress is printed in infinitesimally larger print at the end of all the others. The starring was doubtless some mistake, provincial programmes being always badly printed ; and the catastrophe only occurred when we were playing in a miserable makeshift theatre (a *fit-up* in professional slang) at some wretched little seaside town ; but it served its turn. We were sitting in the green-room, during a wait, when Hoppy observed quite irrelevantly : "I saw Dick Wilder just now. He said to me, 'Why are you looking so sad, Hoppy?' And I said, 'Isn't it just enough to *make* me sad to see people who can't act a bit, raised, and people who have been Pros for fifteen years, shunted?'" "It's quite sickening," said Mrs. Brooks, applying the powder-puff viciously ; "but money does more than talent nowadays, and some people of

course pay hundreds to Wilder just to see their name on the bills." This was an evident hit at us, but as we had paid Wilder nothing we declined to apply it to ourselves. "Such a pity, dear," said Agneta Delaval sweetly to Lilian, "that Wilder should give you parts that suit you so badly. The *idea* of your playing tragedy! With *your* face and figure you were *made* for low comedy!" Here the call-boy intervened to rescue us with a summons to Agneta. "I wish Miss Delaval wouldn't trouble herself on our account," I said angrily, for Lilian had tears in her eyes that were very unbecoming the Amazon whose war-paint she bore. "She's got a wonderful sweet manner, any how," said the faithful Hoppy; "and my! she *does* know how to put on her clothes!" "Miss Nancy Davis," said the call-boy. "Oh, my boots aren't buttoned," cried Hoppy, jumping up (she was playing a page-boy that night), "and, hang it, I've left the button-hook up stairs!"

But one could not seriously be angry with Hoppy. She was so funny, and then she was the same to everybody: "Wilder can't act for nuts" she would say, and she did not think much even of our lion, de Lisle. Hoppy perfectly hated Shakespeare's plays: "I'm sick of them," she groaned, "don't understand a word of them." She certainly entertained views of her own about Shakespearian pronunciation; but then so did many of the others. It is my private belief that they didn't understand half their own speeches. I have myself heard Scroggins call a *nuncio* a *unicorn*; and not one of the company, except Mr. de Lisle, could ever pronounce the word *nuptial*, all invariably making it *nuptual*. "When I've finished this tour," Hoppy would say, "I've done with old Shakespeare. I'll go back to melodrama, and have a

regular old bean-o! Won't I paint my next comp'ny red, that's all!"

The shopping in provincial towns, which generally fell to my lot, was rather amusing. The tradesmen were so pleasant; and so interested in us. Directly they found that I was theatrical (and they did not take long about it) their manner changed, and they adopted a curious but not unpleasant familiarity; in fact, they treated me as one of themselves. They would discuss the plays with us, and make remarks and criticisms on the actors. Indeed, once, when I had made myself particularly affable over the purchase of two mutton-chops, the butcher's assistant leaned smilingly over the counter and asked insinuatingly if I were a sister of Miss Tottie Tomkins? I was "jest 'er style, such a nice easy way with me." After this I thought it prudent to adopt a more frigid demeanour. We used to become very greedy over our small incomes; it was like living on board-wages. I have known Hoppy bully the poultry-shop man one whole morning in order to reduce a ptarmigan from eighteenpence to tenpence. Hoppy was an old hand at bargaining, and the man gave in at last from sheer despair. In my shopping excursions I was always meeting Alice Browne and Miss de Montmorency, arm-in-arm, staring into the windows. They hardly ever seemed to do anything else, unless it were reading penny novels. They rose late, they never studied their parts, and yet when Lilian Evans and I got on, they assured us it was all our wonderful luck. Natalie, on the other hand, deserved better luck than she got; she was the most picturesque girl I have ever seen, with wonderful black hair that fell about her ears something in the style of Rossetti's Venus Verticordia. Mr. de Lisle, I have heard, called her a slut; but then it was



well known that he liked people to be very neat ; and besides (as I have said) Natalie did not worship at his shrine ; she was too sleepy for adoration. Miss de Montmorency was of a different type ; she was emancipated, and talked about free love ; for, though her conduct was as exemplary as the rest of the company's, she liked to be considered a New Woman. She kept a bicycle,—and a temper too, I know, for I saw her once reduce our red-nosed laundress to tears because some part of her wardrobe was not forthcoming in time.

Sometimes on off nights we would visit any rival show that might be going on in the same town. Of course they were always, or we thought so, vastly inferior to our own ; but still they amused us, and also they never cost us anything. At one seaside town, I remember, some of us visited a wretched little show in a fit-up (about the size of the cabin on the top of Mont Blanc) with an audience of about thirteen, mostly boys and babies. It was a town where, as the local agent informed Wilder, “nothing paid but leg-shows,” and where even our show failed to attract much notice. The play reminded one of nothing so much as the third-rate amateur performances of bygone days, where the heroine's only idea of emotion was to revolve her arms continually after the manner of an animated pump, where the villain's only notion of villainy was to make the standard stage-exit crying *Foiled!* with his cloak over his head, and where the good young man's only way of showing his general benevolence was to claw perpetually at vacancy. The theatre was, besides, so small that the unfortunate actors nearly fell into the footlights ; and when they went off at the sides, you could see the wings bulge where they were standing. The prices charged were

modest enough, in all conscience, though I did see one wily small boy waiting half the evening at the door in order to smuggle himself in for half-price (threepence). The poor players ! But the play gained great applause, for the righteous were duly rewarded and the wicked punished.

“It gets on my nerves,” said Miss de Montmorency, at the end of an hour, and we left. This, by the way, is a common expression with theatrical companies ; it is wonderful how soon you learn it. Besides getting things on their nerves actors have various other little weaknesses ; one is an affection for borrowing, and, indeed, in that respect a company might almost be a Mutual Loan Association. Often have Natalie and Hoppy come to me in tears, to borrow ten shillings, being tied fast to their lodging, imprisoned, in fact, till they could pay the bill which should release them. Another professional weakness is a tendency to superstition. Even a sensible actress, if she happen to break a looking-glass, trembles with fear ; should she inadvertently drop the soap in the dressing-room she cries with joy “Work is coming my way !” If she should put on a garment wrong side out, not for worlds will she rectify the blunder for fear of bringing on herself bad luck.

But, after dropping the soap perseveringly every night for a week, good luck did come to Agneta Delaval. She got a London engagement, and promptly threw over Wilder without further parley. Managers are an ill-used race ; they have a bad name which they do not always deserve. Considering all things, it is small wonder that their tempers are occasionally short ; the wonder rather is that they are as good fellows as they are. I remember, in my salad days, asking an actress of some experience what sort of folk managers were to

deal with: "My dear," she said impressively, "they're angels if you're making money for them, and they're the very devil if you aren't." However this may be, they certainly are not, as is so often represented, imperious to or jealous of rising talent; like the equally maligned race of publishers and editors, they are quite awake to the value of a good thing when they find it. So many people dabble with the stage nowadays, with no intention of taking it up seriously, that no wonder managers are apt to be sceptical of genius in the bud.

"I'm sorry for Wilder," said Lilian, unconsciously drawing Mr. de Lisle's classic profile on a letter she was writing. "I think it's a shame to treat him so." "I'm glad; I can't stand him at all," said Natalie Brydges. She had been called an "old geyser" by Dick that very morning when late for rehearsal, and was still feeling sore about it. "He's had a bad notice in this week's *STAGE*," said Hoppy sagely; "that's what made him mad with you, Natalie. He thinks there is a conspiracy against him in the Press." This, I may observe, is a favourite delusion among members of the theatrical profession; and not unknown, I fancy, among artists of other denominations.

Well, I am no longer on the boards, but the profession has left its indelible mark upon me. I am still as stage-struck as Charles Lamb's or Hans Andersen's

old ladies. Whenever a travelling company comes within twenty miles of my residence, I immediately set off to see their show. Only last year at Orvieto, a third-rate Italian company was playing in the town, and I inquired duly of the hotel-porter about the performance. He immediately proposed that the head-waiter (who could speak a little English) should accompany me to explain the jokes. Fancy the jokes in *GENTLEMAN JOE* elaborately explained to the foreigner! But had not my plans been suddenly changed, not even this suggestion would have deterred me.

Of my companions on tour all have long vanished from my ken. Some, like Mr. de Lisle and Lilian Evans, have risen high above it; but the other day I chanced in an omnibus (again a Bow Street one!) to come upon Hop-o'-my-Thumb and Miss de Montmorency, the former in bright green sleeves and an enormous feathery hat, the latter with her hair as usual emancipated, and both with their dogs-eared prompt-books. "Have you heard," I could not resist saying, "of Lilian Evans's good fortune? She is playing lead at a London theatre!" Both their faces darkened, and Hoppy stopped half-way in the macaroon she was nibbling. "I call it the devil's own luck!" cried Miss de Montmorency. "D——d cheek I call it!" said Hop-o'-my-Thumb.

## THE CRAFT OF HUNTING.

IF there be a national distinction on which we English especially pride ourselves, it is our love of sport. It is the characteristic of all others which we claim to be peculiarly our own, and to have been peculiarly our own even before the Norman kings enforced on us an unwilling respect for the tall red deer. It is probable indeed, that if the opinion of the country could be taken, there would be practically an unanimous vote that neither sport nor sportsmen exist outside British territory.

No Matthew Arnold has arisen to chastise this particular form of Philistinism, and the present writer would be the last to put himself forward for such a task ; yet whether we like it or not, we must confess that no language has a poorer vocabulary of the chase than ours, nor, in spite of the gap filled by the Badminton Library, a poorer literature. We intend no disrespect to the shades of Beckford, Scrope, Hawker, Delmé Radcliffe, or Palk Collyns, but their work is not comparable to that of Jacques du Fouilloux who lived in the sixteenth century, nor of Gaston de Foix who lived two centuries before him ; and if we go back to earlier English writers on sport, we find that their books are adaptations, translations, or merely thefts from the French. Gervase Markham is a name of the seventeenth century that is often quoted ; but he, like Lord Brougham, was a man who would lay down the law on any subject, from the conduct of a campaign to the bridling of a horse. He was a compiler pure and simple ; there is little that is original in his work, and that little is apt to be

foolish and pedantic. Turberville's ART OF VENERIE barely professes to be more than a translation of du Fouilloux ; and as to Dame Juliana Berners, though we bow to her biographer's statement that she was " a magnificent woman, a right learned wench (*heroica mulier, ingeniosa virago*)," yet we doubt if we can safely attribute to her any very intelligent interest in the composition of THE BOOK OF ST. ALBANS. She was a pretty woman (*formæ elegantia spectabilis*), so all masculine testimony as to her accomplishments must be received with caution.

It was therefore with a depressing sense of our national deficiencies in this province of literature, that the present writer lately sought out from the manuscripts in the British Museum the two earliest books on sport in the English language ; THE CRAFT OF HONTYNG and THE MAYSTER OF THE GAME. Neither has yet been printed, the former is extremely rare, and both have suffered from undeserved neglect. Moreover, THE CRAFT OF HONTYNG under its alternative title, THE VENERY OF MAYSTER JOHN GYFFORD AND WILLIAM TWETY THAT WERE WITH KING EDWARD THE SECOUNDE, sounded promisingly national ; while the name of Gyfford (or Giffard) even warranted a hope that the first English treatise on sport might have sprung, like so much that is worthy in England, from the great and famous county of Devon. Alas ! a short glance at the beautiful vellum pages dashed these hopes to the ground. William Twety assumed his true name of Guillaume Twici ; and THE CRAFT OF HONTYNG was unmasked as L'ART DE VENERIE

LEQUEL MAISTRE GUILLAUME TWICI  
VENOUR LE ROY D'ANGLETERRE FIST  
EN SON TEMPS PER APRANDRE AUTRES.  
In plain English, a French sportsman  
had been appointed to instruct the  
ignorant islanders in the ways of  
Venery.

By a curious caprice of fortune the French work of Twici seems to have perished, and thus England holds, so far as we know, precedence in the foundation of a literature of sport. The loss of the original is however a misfortune, as it prevents us from separating the English from the French element in the treatise. The book opens with a short poem which we would willingly ascribe to the inspiration of John Gyfford, as of one kindled to loftier utterance by the greatness of his theme; but the unfortunate fact remains that the early French sportsmen, notably Gaston Phœbus and du Fouilloux, were incurable rhymesters, and we are therefore forbidden to lay this flattering unction to our critical soul.

All such disport as voideth idleness  
It fitteth every gentleman to know.

Such is the proposition set down in the first two lines, which, being conclusively proved in a brief argument of two lines more, gives way to a second proposition, that "to know the craft of hontyng and to blow [the horn]" is the best of all such disports; and this being rightly taken as self-evident, the poet "casts him first to set young hunters in the way of Venery." Do the degenerate young hunters of this day know how many are the beasts of Venery and of chase, and which they be? If not, let them store these lines in their memory.

The hare, the hart, the wolf, the wild boar  
also,  
Of Venery for sooth there be no mo . . . .  
And there ben other bestis five of chase  
The buck the first, the doe the second (*sic*)

The fox the third which ofte hath hard  
grace,  
The fourth the martin, and the last the  
roe;  
And sooth to say there be no more of tho.

But we have not yet exhausted our list, for there remains still unmentioned one animal for whose name English sportsmen will justly look.

Three other bestis be of great disport  
That neither [be] of Venery ne chase;  
In hunting ofte they do great comfort  
As after ye shall hear in other place.  
The grey is one thereof with sleepy pace,  
The cat another, the otter one also.  
Now read this book and ye shall find it so.

And further, lest readers should be in doubt as to the identity of the several beasts, they are "set down in portraiture," deftly grouped according to their several classes; an addition which the author is careful to excuse in eight lines of rather intricate argument, that he may not be thought to have omitted verbal description through mere idleness. Being unable to reproduce these figures here, we need only explain that a *grey* is a badger, the shorter name being that regularly employed by the Reverend Mr. Topsell in his *HISTORY OF FOUR-FOOTED BEASTS AND SERPENTS*,<sup>1</sup> and duly accepted by the Great Lexicographer.

The prologue ended, our author calls upon all that will learn of Venery to hear the words of John Gyfford and William Twety, and forthwith plunges into his subject. Let hunters of fox and deer hide their diminished heads, for "Now wyll we begin of the hare and why she is most merveyulous best [beast] of the world." We despair of making clear to the prejudiced reader the attributes which give the hare so high a place; how that she "beareth grease" and chews the cud as the hart; how that she is at one time male and other time

<sup>1</sup> London, 1658.

female (which means that both sexes may be hunted), and how therefore it is lawful to hunt her alone of all beasts all the year round. Suffice it that all men may blow at her as at the hart, the boar, and the wolf, and that all the fair words of Venery may be fittingly used when men go forth to seek her. What, even *tally-ho*! will be the jealous comment of the modern Englishman on this last sentence. Certainly not, we answer; we know of no such sound in the fourteenth century as *tya-hillaut*, or the English corruption thereof, among the fair words of Venery. It is a base and meaningless innovation of the sixteenth century or thereabouts; though even so, as will be seen, it has not wholly displaced its more venerable predecessor. Sport, as we undertake to prove by conclusive extracts from contemporary writers, has by admission been degenerating steadily since the fourteenth century.

Thoroughly in character with the pedantry and precision of the foregoing is the author's succeeding paragraph. Abruptly leaving the most marvellous beast in the world, he launches forth into a kind of catechism on the most recondite points of Venery, which brings Mayster John Gyfford to the end of his vocabulary, and seemingly of his wits also. "Sir hunter," asks the catechist suddenly, "how many beasts be acquill [sic]?" "Sir," replies the pupil, "the buck, the doe, the male fox and the female, and all other vermin so many as be put in the book." In what book? Is the reference to some old code of Forest Laws, as inviolable in its day as the constitution of the United States; or is it possible that Guillaume Twici himself was no more than a borrower from that prince of all sporting writers Gaston Phœbus? Unhappily John Gyfford vouchsafes us no hint; more fortunate than most toilers in the mill

of examination, he had the book by him, and was selfishly content.

The next question will, we fancy, bring our readers near to their wits' end also. "Sir hunter, how many beasts bear os and orgos?" The answer comes pat enough. "The hart beareth os above [besides] the boar, and the buck beareth orgos;" but lest it should leave readers little the wiser, we hasten to add that *os* and *orgos* are simply French technical terms for the dewclaws of the beasts above mentioned, *orgos* (which the copyist has also written *argus*) being an attempt at the French *ergots*.

It is worth while to note these early attempts to foist French sporting terms upon our native tongue, and their almost complete failure. Pedantic nonsense some may call it; but if it be a heresy (as undoubtedly it is) to speak of the scut of a fox or the brush of a hare, we do not see why it should be blameless to call a fallow-deer's dewclaws *os*, and a red deer's *ergots*. Mr. Jorrocks was no pedant, but even he says, "Beware of calling hounds dogs, and sterns tails;" and in those days the sense of sporting propriety was much keener than it is now. Gaston de Foix and du Fouilloux both give a careful table of the answers which a good huntsman should make to certain test-questions of Venery, that no solecisms of language might lower the dignity of the noble science. And if there be in nine cases out of ten no English equivalent for a good and useful French expression, the only conclusion is that the English were less observant in their sport and less accurate in their wood-craft.

But the next paragraph of our treatise offers us some little comfort. Suddenly abandoning his catechism the author rushes headlong to a new subject. "Now will we speak of the hart, and speak we of his degrees



that is to say, the first year he is a calf, the second year a brocket, the third year a spayer, the fourth a stag, the fifth year a great stag, the sixth a hart." Here is a list containing several good English words ; sufficient evidence that we once possessed at any rate a certain number of terms of Venery of our own. Moreover it is clear that they held their own against the French, for they are reproduced two centuries later by Turberville, and survive, one or two of them, even to this day.

But when we come to the description of a red deer's head, our author relapses into servility to the nation "beyond sea." No attempt is made to sum the tines until the deer bears a head of ten points ; and then the computation is always made, according to the French fashion, by even numbers. Thus a stag with eleven points is summed as bearing "ten of the more," one with twelve points, as bearing "twelve of the less," one of thirteen points as bearing "twelve of the more," and so on. Again the three points which in a full-grown stag are generally found sprouting in succession out of the main horn from the point where it joins the skull, are called antler, royal, and surroyal. Not a word is said of the still extant terms brow, bay, and trey, which must almost certainly have been in use, at any rate in Devon and Somerset. Nay, Gyfford does not mention the word "rights," still used to summarise the brow, bay, and trey, though it can be proved to have been in vogue among us in the fourteenth century. Small wonder that even our few indigenous terms of Venery perished when Englishmen took so little pains to preserve them.

We have hardly emerged from the tangled forest of tines when our author besets us with another catechism, this time "of blowing." Modern English-

men, who hunt to ride and therefore avoid woodland-hunting, and modern hounds, which are bred for speed rather than keenness of scent, have between them sufficiently extinguished the old scientific use of the horn. In the bygone days when men hunted almost entirely in great forests, and deemed it heresy to change from the quarry that they had roused to a fresh one, no man who did not wear a horn and know how to blow it was considered a sportsman. It was no easy matter to stick to a cunning old stag, harboured with great difficulty and considerable skill, when he beat through miles of covert and coppice, turning up all the unwarrantable deer, or "rascal" as they were called, as he went ; for staunch as old hounds may be, there are always heedless puppies or idle babblers to distract and mislead them. So, with the fear of change ever before their eyes, the sportsmen dispersed widely through the forest, always on the watch for a view of the deer or a sight of his slot, and signalled to each other that all was right, or if the reverse of right, in what respect anything was wrong.

There was good fellowship too in the horn-blowing. "How shall we blow," asks the catechist, "when we have seen the hart ?" "I shall blow after one mote, two motes," replies the pupil ; "and if mine hounds come not hastily to me as I would, I shall blow four motes for to hasten them to me and to warn the gentles that the hart is seen." There is no anxiety, let us note, to slip away from a tiresome and unsportsmanlike field, but rather strenuous endeavour to inform them what is going forward, "that every man about you that hath skill of Venery may know in what point ye be in your game by your horn." And the hounds and the quarry were no less regarded than the gentles in the blowing of the horn ; for, continues our

author, "then shall I rechase on mine hounds three times, and when the hart is far from me, then shall I chase him in this manner, *trout, trout, tro ro rot, trout, trout, tro ro rot, tro ro rot, tro ro rot.*"

Such was the primitive method of writing down horn-notes before they were thought worthy, as in Fouilloux's day, of musical notation. The instrument itself, so far as we can gather, was also simple, though we learn that there were divers kinds of horns, bugles, hunters' horns, small foresters' horns, and mean horns of two manners. But as the choicest kind was distinguished by being "waxed with green wax", the inference is that all alike were made, as their name implies, of a bullock's horn, and therefore probably incapable of producing more than one note. Nevertheless, however rude they may have been, they were treated very seriously, and when, as for instance on a stag's turning to bay, the gentlemen all clapped horn to lips and blew in exultant chorus the effect must have been striking indeed; while yet more cheerful were the concerted blasts over the death and the bleeding of the hounds, the mort and the quarry (*curée*). They were heard on an historic occasion on Cheviot when the Percy with his fifteen hundred archers went a-poaching on the lands of the Douglas, and killed a hundred harts.

They blew a mort upon the bent,  
They assembled on sides shear;  
To the quarry then the Percy went  
To the brittling of the deer.

And if we would know the form of the horn that was blown on that bloody day, we need look no farther than to the instrument carried by the Queen's huntsmen or to the appointments of our regiments of Light Infantry.

From the horn to the voice is the natural transition, and our author's

next paragraph is accordingly devoted to the fair words of Venery. But as we know that all these can be fitly employed in the chase of the hare, we are not surprised that he should at once take us out after that marvellous beast. All is laid down with the regularity of a rubric, but alas, the fair words are without exception French. "If ye honte at the hare ye shall say at the uncoupling [hounds until comparatively recent times were always taken to the meet in couples] '*hors de couples, avant* (off couples, away)' and after, three times, *sohow, sohow, sohow.*" Here is the oldest of all our surviving hunting-cries, now consecrated only to the chase of the hare, but in old days, "going to all manner of chases," by no means too ignoble for the hart and yet not too lofty for the fox. Is it English? Again, no, it is French as *tally-ho*, for all its simplicity. For, says our treatise, when the hounds have been uncoupled "ye shall say '*sa, sa cy avant, sohow*'; and if ye see that your hounds have good will to ken and be far from you, ye shall say thus, '*how amy, how amy, swef* [*?suivez*] *mon amy, swef* (Hi, follow, boys, follow).'" Here therefore are the component parts of the word, *sa* and *how*, in two successive cheers; for, as John Gyfford tells us (and it seems that this is his one original observation), "*Sohow* is moche to say as *Sahow*, for by cause that it is short, we say always *sohow.*" *Sa* is a favourite and constantly recurrent hunting-noise in the old French books, and for aught we know in the modern French chase; indeed the syllable seems to be fitting on all occasions when anything very impetuous is going forward, as the *saha* of the fencing-school seems to testify. Probably the peculiar sound of encouragement to hounds when feeding, which is spelt by Whyte Melville *sess*, is simply a survival of this same sound; and it is

perhaps hardly too daring to conjecture that the hissing whereby men stir dogs up to fight, possibly even the hissing wherewith grooms accompany the plying of the wisp, may be traced likewise to this same pregnant syllable. We make no apology for this digression on *soho*, for the word has stamped itself upon history as the war-cry of Monmouth's army at Sedgemoor, in allusion, so Macaulay holds, to Soho-Fields in London, where their leader's palace stood ; though others, including Pennant, give the watchword priority.

Another strange and very mysterious noise which was used to encourage hounds to hunt is *illeosq*, or *illeosquez*. We do not presume to translate or pronounce it ; but is it not the origin of the sound *eleu*, which is so often in the mouths of huntsmen and gamekeepers, and in fact of all men who hunt wild beasts with dogs, and possibly, as the termination suggests, of *yoicks* also ? It was always repeated thrice, as was also *soho*,—"thrice and no more," says the book very plainly and decidedly, but without stating any reason. If we might hazard a conjecture (which we do in all seriousness and in no scoffing spirit) as to this number, we should say that it was chosen in honour of the Trinity, which formerly found recognition in the most unexpected quarters.

The rest of the fair words of Venery are simply sentences of French. Our author makes no effort to give us those in use in England ; he will not even take the trouble to write the familiar English *hark*, but boldly sets down *oyez*, as though a huntsman were no more than a bellman or a crier. Again he calls the hare familiarly the "court cow (*court queue*, short tail)," though he could easily have found or even invented a telling English equivalent. Shakespeare hunts his hare all through the famous

run in VENUS AND ADONIS by the name of Wat ; but John Gyfford gives no sign that the appellation was known to him, though he probably heard it, as well as Colin for a stag and Robin for a red-breast, all round him when he went into the country. He has even the effrontery to speak of a hare's form as her "kycher (*coucher*)."

Moreover when his enumeration of the words of Venery is closed he does not pause to chase his hare lovingly through every turn and double and circle, but incontinently runs into her and breaks her up. "Ye shall give your hounds the hollow, the side, the neck, and the head," he explains, "and the loin shall to kechowne (kitchen)." The obsequies of the hart, the buck, and the boar, all sadly slurred over considering the importance of the ceremony, thereupon follow each other in quick succession, and then we are again face to face with the catechist. "How many herds be there of Venery?" he asks. "Sir, of harts, of bisses, of bucks, and of does ; a sounder of wild swine ; a bevy of roes." Here we lose all patience. The terms of Venery are doubtless correct enough ; but for a man to corrupt the French *biches* into bisses, when the good word hind stands ready at his elbow, is unpardonable.

But our author presently revives our interest for a moment by the remark that the season of the fox begins at the Nativity of Our Lady (September 8th) and lasts to the Annunciation (March 25th). Probably few readers are aware that the feasts of the Church, as affording by their multiplicity abundance of convenient dates, formerly governed the seasons of game as exclusively as they did the collection of rents. In these degenerate times there are many men who could not tell you the date of Lady-Day or Michaelmas, while village children reckon their birthdays by the

fair-day of the nearest town. Formerly church and sport were nearly allied: the parish church-bells of North Devon and West Somerset were rung at the death of a good stag, and till quite recently there was a village where *As pants the Hart* was sung at the opening of the stag-hunting season; but what sportsman is there that looks forward with intelligent interest to the anniversary of Our Lady's Nativity?

Entering however into John Gyfford's spirit we read with high hope of the sacred entrance of the fox-hunting season, and follow our erratic writer through a lengthy exhortation addressed to hounds at fault, when suddenly, without a moment's warning, "*Explicit le Venery de Twety and of Mayster John Gyfford*,"—the treatise, fitly ended by this curious bastard sentence, comes to an abrupt close.

We are tempted to ask why it was ever written; what is the meaning of this primer (for it is no more) of classical Venery, why this attempt to gallicise the English world of sport? The question is not easily answered, but there is a possible explanation. Among the sons of King Edward the Third and Queen Philippa, the fifth in succession and the least brilliant in intellect was Edmund, first Duke of York, "hight of Langley," that is, of King's Langley in Hertfordshire, where he was born in the year 1341. Like a good soldier Edmund went to the French wars with his father in 1359, and served for several years under him and under his famous brother, finally accomplishing the last of his campaigns in Portugal in 1380-82. On the accession of Richard the Second he turned his hand to civil business and was thrice Regent of England; so that he may be said to have had considerable experience of command both in peace and war.

But none the less, whether from sheer idleness or from being spoiled by women, for he was extremely handsome, or from an invincible passion for the chase, he never loved serious work. When, says the old rhyming chronicler,

When all the Lords to Councell and  
Parlement  
Went, he wolde to hunt and also hawkyng.

Moreover, as a further clue to his character and in proof that he was not ashamed of it,

A fox tail he bare ay on his spere  
Where as he rode in peace or elles in  
war.

We cannot pretend to disclaim sympathy with his tastes, but at a time when the English dominion over France was at stake, it is possible that they were unfortunate. Be that as it may, it seems certain that when his nephew ascended the throne he made the chase the serious business of his life and controlled that particular department of the State's affairs.

The King then made the Duke of York  
by name  
Master of the mewhouse and his hawkes  
fayre,  
Of his Venery and Mayster of his game  
In what countrie he did repair,  
Which was to him without any despair  
Wel more comforte and grete gladness  
Than bene a lord of worldly great  
rychesse.

Now may it not have been that this royal Squire Western sought out even as a boy such men as could give him instruction in Venery, and forced the two old officers of Edward the Second's court to supply him with a primer? May it not have been also that having seen the dainty perfection of the French chase, having possibly even discoursed with the famous Gaston Phœbus, he found his sporting soul vexed within him when he

returned from the wars to the slovenly and unceremonious methods of English Venery, that he sought to improve them on the French model and used his dignity and position as Master of the Game for the purpose?

The conjecture is not original with us, and we are therefore the more ready to accept it; moreover the dedication of the treatise that immediately follows *THE CRAFT OF HONTYNG* in the Cotton manuscript shows that it is highly probable. The author of *THE MAYSTER OF THE GAME*, for such is the title he gives to it, describes himself as holding that office under King Henry the Fourth, and as Edmund Langley was by no means on bad terms with Henry of Lancaster, and was devoted above all things to the chase, there is nothing extravagant in assuming that he was not ill pleased to retain his appointment under the new sovereign. Henry, again, might well be disposed to confirm him in his old post from motives both of friendship and policy, for Edmund, like most of his kind, was a popular man,

All gentle disport as to a lord appent  
He used aye, and to the poor supporting  
Wherever he was in any place biding  
Without suppryse or any estorcyon  
Of the porayle [pauvrail] or any oppression.

That the two treatises are from the same hand, the recurrence of identical phrases and of the principal features in both renders almost certain. The probability is that the first was only a sketch for a larger and more important work, which was abandoned when the writer obtained access to the manuscript written by Gaston de Foix. Froissart, who visited Gaston in 1385, says nothing about the book, though he records that his host loved hounds of all beasts, and hunting both winter and summer, so that it may well have taken another ten years or more to reach England.

But we must reserve *THE MAYSTER OF THE GAME* for a separate paper, for to discuss it in the short space that remains to us would be an insult to the shade of Gaston and, in du Fouilloux's phrase, to derogate from the dignity of Venery.



## MY FRIEND ARCANIEVA.

OLDBERRY met me with more than his habitual joyousness of aspect while I was divesting myself of my outer coat in the hall of the Athenæum, a little club which a few choice spirits of Dublin had formed in Molesworth Street, a correct but decidedly dismal street on the attractive edge of society.

"I am glad you were able to come this evening, Paddy," he said. "Lumley has brought down a splendid Russian fellow. He came with letters to some of the men of Trinity, and Lumley is doing the honours."

"I am glad, too. Bridget is better now, and she ordered me away, found me, in fact, getting stupid, which she attributed to the atmosphere of the sick-room."

"I hope you told her that the club called in a body."

"Indeed I did, Oldberry. All you fellows are so kind to us; Bridget wonders as much as I."

Oldberry looked at me smiling in his pleasant way. "Why, Paddy, you're the pride of the club; and as for Miss Bridget, we all worship the ground she treads on."

Oldberry took my arm and led me across the hall into a little room where the members read and wrote letters on the club note-paper. Near a row of book-shelves I saw Lumley's broad shoulders and his massive brown head; he was holding a book in one hand, and with the other was accentuating his words by a series of vivid gesticulations. Beside him stood a remarkable figure. The delicate face, with its large luminous eyes, was of pale

olive tint, like that of faded ivory, and there was something in the excessive blackness of the hair, pointed beard, and moustache, suggesting eastern rather than southern blood. The man was slim to a fault, and not above the middle height. He wore his hair brushed off his forehead like a child's ready for the round comb; an ugly fashion, I noted, and nothing less picturesque than his head and face could carry off an effect so unbecoming. The hair behind fell on to the top of his velvet coat-collar; and this collar, curving deeply round his long neck, and low in front to display a quantity of soft silk neckerchief, looked no less foreign and striking than his head.

"Ah!" cried Lumley, spying me, and holding out his hand with his smiles of cordial pleasure. "This is Paddy, our Paddy!"

All the fellows called me Paddy, and smiled when they greeted me. I have always thought it was because of the pleasure they took in pronouncing my name.

"Paddy!" murmured the Russian, letting his luminous gaze rest gently on my face, and I saw that even his deep eyes were stirred by something like a smile as he hesitated over the fascinating syllables. "It is a kind of sensation to meet any one of the name," he said, and his English was perfect.

"Then the rascally charm of 'Paddy' has penetrated to far Russia," laughed Lumley.

"We speak of an Irishman as Paddy, just as we speak of an Eng-

lishman as John Bull; only somehow John Bull does not make us smile, and we invariably show our teeth when we say Paddy. You must excuse me, sir, but the name is so sympathetic and humorous,—like the face of a good-tempered child.”

“Oh, it’s never necessary to apologise to Paddy,” said Oldberry; “he does not understand the disagreeable in anything. He has got an enviable trick of shutting his eyes upon all that is unpleasant, and everything he sees pleases him.”

Oldberry, you perceive, is a good-natured fellow. Indeed they are all good-natured fellows at the Athenæum. Why they should agree to spoil me in their persistent way is a question I cannot answer.

We fell into literary chat. Lumley had just founded a new review, which we fondly hoped would eclipse the famous EDINBURGH, and of its prospects each had much to say. We all wrote poetry, essays, and short stories in those days. I have never been able to ascertain that the IRISH REVIEW seriously interfered with the reputation and circulation of the great Whig organ: indeed, I fear that, like most things Irish, it appealed too exclusively to local tastes; but we were proud of it, we were desperately in earnest, and we were exceedingly industrious. And when Arcanieva actually proposed to translate a short story by Tourgenieff and write an essay on Russian politics for us, we literally embraced him, toasted him in punch, and listened respectfully to his views expressed between continuous puffs of cigarettes.

As an Englishman or a Frenchman, he would have interested us; as a Russian he simply captivated us. His slow lisping tones, his careful enunciation, the breathless magnitude of his views upon European questions, which we approached with provincial

reticence and timidity, that queer black head of his and the impassable ivory face,—all combined to catch our fancy and mysteriously inflame our imagination. We in Dublin are insufficiently accustomed to foreign influences, and hence our awe of the foreigner. Frenchmen have occasionally sought the shelter of our hospitable shores, and have been kind enough to profess themselves both amused and interested. A casual Italian has settled in our midst, and fallen in love with our ladies. I think I have even heard of a German domesticated among us. But a Russian! The picture of a Chinese, a Turk, or a Japanese walking our streets and familiarly greeting us by name could not have excited or astounded us more. For weeks we went about seeking wild and improbable excuses for coming in contact with the fascinating stranger. We grew proud and ostentatious, and spoke with frantic volubility of Tolstoi and Lermontoff and Ivan Tourgenieff. A few of us went so far as to purchase Ollendorff’s method of learning Russian, and called one another Gospodi this and Gospodi that, in a tripping lively way that hinted a considerable knowledge of the language behind it. What a splendid thing it was, we felt, to walk down Grafton Street with a real live Tartar; not in the least like a Tartar, but a gentle polished creature, who might be a Russian attaché, and who held us spell-bound by his discourse, which flowed softly and fluently from his handsome lips and sometimes tangled itself in the waves of his silky beard. Yes, we were proud of him; proud of his distinction, of his appearance, of his universal knowledge, of his revolutionary principles, and of his evident appreciation of ourselves. A Russian who was not a Nihilist would have pleased us less, as a being deprived of

special local colour. It was impossible to be more cultured or more revolutionary than young Arcanieva; consequently our enthusiasm knew no bounds.

My sister Bridget was feverishly anxious to see him, so I proposed on the first occasion to bring him out to our modest little house at Donnybrook.

Bridget and I had grown up together, indispensable to each other, tenderly attached by ties far deeper than those of blood; by ties of sympathy, of taste, of solitude, and a quaint infantine reliance that was physical almost as much as intellectual. The pleasure of a book would be marred for me if Bridget had not read it, to discuss it with me; the daintiest meal would be tasteless for her, if I were not there to share it. Except during office-hours, and my weekly visit to the club, we were never separated. The fellows never wanted to see me alone. They knew that Bridget was my second self, and loved to sit and talk to her in our pleasant little parlour on the Donnybrook Road. They all admired and loved her, just as if she were their sister as well as mine. I do not know how much it is permitted a brother to say in praise of his sister; but at the risk of offending against an unwritten law, I will admit with pride that Bridget is the prettiest and the sweetest woman I have ever met. With her there my fireside is abundantly decorated; and I have not yet felt the temptation to desire another presence.

The mention of Arcanieva, as I have said, excited her, and a description of his person and his qualifications by no means tended to allay the excitement. We had both read *WAR AND PEACE*, and, in spite of noble resolutions, had been unable to conceal from ourselves that it was colossally dull. Bridget, being of a finer and

more charitable nature, qualified the condemnation by calling it cyclopean; she said it reminded her of the vast steppes of Russia and its wide half-peopled dominions. It followed, she thought, that a book treating of such a nation could not accurately be lively or sparkling. In the interest of local colour she was willing to sacrifice her individual taste, and to describe it, with a solemn shake of her pretty brown head, as a great work, a profound, a cyclopean view of life. I swallowed the cyclopean, as I would have swallowed an elephant, if physically able to do so, upon her persuasion, and with much misgiving applied myself to *ANNA KARENINA*. We made better way with this, though neither of us would have thought the book less powerful or less entertaining, if that heavy agricultural philosopher, Levine, had been left out of it. On the whole, we enjoyed *ANNA KARENINA*, and were determined to speak of it with unqualified admiration, saying nothing whatever about Levine, when Arcanieva came.

He came to tea one Sunday afternoon. When he stepped into the soft lamplight, smiling upon us both, I thought I had never seen anything more strangely handsome than his head with its shining dusky hair brushed roundly off it and touching the broad velvet collar, that had an appearance really Byronic. His gleaming eyes, after a slight smile of greeting directed towards me, rested intensely upon Bridget's face,—rested thereon deliberately, complacently, but not in the least impertinently. What they saw must have pleased them, however beautiful the Russian ladies may be. Bridget looked like a little Dresden statue thrilled into life, in a state of fluttering pink and white excitement, her soft blue eyes burning lustroously as with an inward flame. She held out her hand, and it was a very pretty

hand, slim and white and deliciously dimpled. Arcanieva smiled as he took it, as if he wished us to understand that he thought the habit of shaking hands upon introduction a singularly agreeable practice, when the proffered hand was that of a pretty woman.

He drank several cups of tea, and ate several thin slices of bread-and-butter and some plum-cake, with an evident relish, talking the while in a persistent murmuring stream. He spoke well: his voice was musical and slow, with a slight lisp that was an added attraction; and his language was rather more correct than that of the average young Englishman who frequents drawing-rooms and drinks tea of an afternoon. His culture, considering his youth, was amazing, and more amazing still were his theories. He was a theosophist, and discoursed in an odd vague way about the Elemental. I had a tremendous respect for his intellect, but for the life of me I could never get at his meaning when he mounted this particular hobby. I used to dream afterwards that I was wandering through space greeted continuously with the word *elemental* in letters of fire. As well as I could make out from his soft vague monologue, Lermontoff and Byron were the only men of genius who have this quality of elemental. English literature was a conventional imposition; the French was also a sham, an unconventional sham, blighted by the so-called *esprit gaulois*,—which he translated “the spirit of sex,” and I thought the definition good; Germany nourished herself upon thin sentimentalities; and the South had long since burned itself out in the fire and brimstone of its own gross passions. In the puff of a cigarette he obliterated all their claims, and Russia stood out, sharply defined, as he seemed to think, by that inexplicable word *elemental*, rising from an ocean of potentialities to build itself

an impregnable and permanent dominion upon the ruins of decayed literatures by the force of its own young blood and unemasculated senses. Of the originality and potential strength of Russian literature he had not a doubt, and expressed himself, when on this theme, with an eloquence and fluency that charmed us, and carried us away.

“And Ireland?” Bridget asked him breathlessly, with a glance of enchanted surprise.

“Ireland, my dear young lady, has its future. It is perhaps farther away than ours, which nearly touches the present. But you will need to throw off the chains of imitation. You are at present neither Irish nor English, simply provincial. You copy the English,—may I say it and not offend?—badly, weakly. You have less of the Elemental in you than the savage races who breathe at least by themselves, until they, too, are spoiled by imitation. You are an interesting race, a delightful race; but you are an embryonic race, and the Potential is not as yet discovered in you.”

We felt unreasonably abashed; our judge was so amiable, so suave, so inexpressibly superior. Yet Bridget found voice to make a spirited protest for the honour of her beloved land.

I next met Arcanieva at a college breakfast-party in Lumley's rooms. He was still holding forth softly upon the Elemental and decayed literatures, and smiled as charmingly as ever when congratulated upon a really pretty poem that had recently appeared in our review under his name. I mentioned my official address, and said I should take it as a favour to be occasionally disturbed in my easy labours by his engaging presence, and also pressed him to drink tea with my sister on the following Sunday. He was delighted with both proposals,

and came next day to my office in Dame Street, carrying with him his poetic head, and the Elemental, and his notions upon European literatures, as fresh and gay and pleased with himself as though I was to be introduced to it all for the first time.

The other fellows were beginning to weary of him, and ask under their breath, what the deuce kept him in such an outlandish place as Dublin; but I still remained faithful to the old strange interest his first appearance had awakened in us all. They called him a bore, but he was so handsome and foreign and courteous, he smiled so delightfully, and rolled his cigarettes with such deftness, that it was a real pleasure for me to observe him; and whether I understood him or not, or was wearifully conscious of having heard over and over all he had to say about the Elemental, and the Potential, and the *esprit gaulois*, the musical fluency of his speech fell upon my ear with the soothing charm of a brook chattering along a sunny meadow. His voice was never rough or hurried; his face was never clouded; he never rasped my nerves, or called for explanation or contradiction; he was not in the least argumentative. The fellows laughed at my apology, and assured me I was born to be an encouragement for the bores who could not exist if there were not fools of my sort willing to be persecuted by them. This was their facetious way of implying that I am that most laughable of creatures, a good-natured man.

Arcanieva came very often to my office. On the second occasion he asked permission to write a couple of letters. I gave him some note-paper and envelopes. He wrote his letters, smoked a cigarette, and then went away, leaving them behind him. Of course I stamped them, and sent them to the post. A few days later he

came again, and asked if I could oblige him with a sheet of paper. In silence I handed him some sheets and some envelopes, then said without the slightest ironical intent, "There are stamps in that box," and then coloured furiously lest I should have hurt his feelings. I think that I suffer more after the indulgence of any little pleasantry of a sarcastic flavour against my fellow-creatures than the object of it. But Arcanieva wrote on tranquilly, and, closing his letter, he reached forward, dipped his olive fingers into the box, and—Heavenly Powers, can I have been mistaken?—but it certainly seemed to me that he helped himself to more than the required stamp; hastily lowering my eyes before he could know that I had detected him, I yet was able to see his hand wander to his waistcoat-pocket.

It was not the first time that I had noticed in Arcanieva an indelicacy in small matters, and an inclination to pocket trifles. If you offered him a cigarette, a vesta, a fusee, or a lump of sugar, he invariably made provision for such times as he might be in need of the article, by slipping a few more into his pocket. It made me feel meaner than he to have to take note of such things; and the fact that it was becoming daily more and more difficult for me to think well of Arcanieva was a source of real distress to me.

This distress was soon sharpened to poignancy upon a discovery that banished the tranquil confidence between my sister and me. Between us, a dividing, because a silencing element, sat and hovered the young God of Love. We felt his presence, and his wings were as a wall between us. When I came home at night, I saw Bridget's pretty face flush and pale and her eyes glance quickly behind me. A certain head of faded



ivory and dusky hair, if seen there, would flush her cheek with a confessing glow ; their absence would bring a disappointed quiver to her soft little mouth.

Arcanieva spoke naïvely and enthusiastically about his passion. He took the whole college and club into his confidence, and went about raving of "that adorable Miss Bridget," till all the fellows longed to be at his throat. Indeed, it was becoming painful to me to visit the Athenæum. Some friend was sure to drag me into a corner, and burst into frantic abuse of Arcanieva. He was a low adventurer, a schemer, an impostor. Nobody knew where he came from, who, or what he was. Lumley didn't know, nor did any of the rest to whom he had brought letters. Webster had picked him up in Paris, and given him a letter to Lumley. Had I not heard the last reports about him ? I begged to be spared, and shrank from the shame of hearing evil of the man my sister loved. But they would not spare me ; they protested that it lay on their conscience to hear the rascal prating about Miss Bridget and his offensive love, that they resented it personally, and that I was bound to close my doors upon him.

Close my doors upon him while Bridget's heart was open to him ? Pleasant counsel to a man who is constitutionally incapable of hurting a fly. I escaped from the Athenæum, shunned Lumley and dear old Oldberry, and took long solitary walks when I left the office to avoid the vexing sight of Bridget's pain and joy. I was in a dilemma ; duty compelled me to act, and nature made action in the circumstances peculiarly distasteful to me. My feelings towards the handsome Russian as nearly approached exasperation as possible ; for, now that my sister's name was openly coupled with Arcanieva's, it behoved me to

make inquiries, than which nothing was more hateful to me.

The evening on which I reached this unwonted decision, I resolved to break the heavy silence between us as I walked home to Bridget. She greeted me with the same quick glance over my shoulder that so distressed me, and then the little pink flush ebbed back to its excited source, and she looked paler and prettier than ever.

"Bridget, have you lost confidence in me ?" I asked, with difficulty and an odd hurrying of my pulses.

"Paddy, you dear, dear boy, what a question !" she cried, looking away from me into the fire ; but I saw that she understood, for her cheeks grew hot.

"Have you nothing to tell me ?" She turned her face towards me very wistfully, and my eyes, meeting hers, cried pardon for the wound my tongue was forced to inflict. "Do you love young Arcanieva ? Tell me, dear." She hid her face against my shoulder, and the tell-tale flush reached her hair and spread down to her throat. "Do you want to marry him ?" And now I felt to the full how brutal is this probing of a thing so delicate and fearful as a girl's heart. How could I expect her to answer a question that, not I, but another alone had the right to ask ? She moved from me in a grieved, proud way, and I put out my hand imploringly, cut to the quick by her pain. "Don't answer me, Bridget. I have been troubled about you, dear, and your happiness is all I think of. But I had no right to ask you that question ; please forget it."

I went out, more anxious and perplexed than ever, and determined to call on Lumley and ask his advice. When I reached College Green I met Lumley himself walking towards the college. It was a fine bright evening, and he proposed we

should stroll about the streets instead of immuring ourselves in a close room. He listened attentively to my story, shook his head several times, and stroked his chin in a thoughtful, judicial way. Lumley had an immense opinion of his own wisdom, and liked to be sued for advice. "Now look here, Paddy; you know you always were a complete idiot. You and that charming sister of yours are just like a pair of infants playing with snakes. You know nothing of life, and, what is more, you never will; you'll simply grow into an aged child, but never into a man. You have a pretty imagination, and put you in a library with pen and ink and German poems or Irish legends to be translated,—there you are in capital form. But give you swindlers and knaves to contend with, and there you are,—a fool."

"But didn't you all believe in him as well as I? You brought him down to the Athenæum, Lumley."

"Yes; but I didn't bring him into the bosom of my family; I didn't fling him in the way of a pretty confiding sister. I gave him dinners and liquors and tobacco: I lent him small sums which he failed to return; and when he began to borrow bigger sums, I cut him short. While you go about with your ears stuffed with wool or your own simplicity, mine are open to all the gossip in the air. That fellow has already taken in a score of pious old ladies. He goes to see them, drinks tea with them, and discourses on esoteric Buddhism. Then the old ladies are in a religious flutter and want to convert him. He is willing enough to be converted if they pay him; and what religious old lady ever refused to open her purse when it contains the chance of a recovered soul? He has changed his religion six times within the last six months. Has he

asked you for a subscription for his Russian book?" I confessed that he had, and had obtained it. "I thought so. Well, I am in a position to state that not a page of that book has been written, and not a page will ever be written. The scoundrel came to the office yesterday and begged me to let him have ten pounds. I declined, whereupon he produced a revolver and swore he would shoot himself if I didn't. 'Shoot away,' said I, and went on reading proofs. He disappeared into the inner room and came out with an air of desperate resolution. 'Will you lend me the money, Lumley?' 'No,' said I, without looking up. He disappeared again. I see by your face you are shocked at my callousness, my soft-hearted Paddy; you'd have been taken in, I know. Well, I was not. Besides, I argued thus, 'If Arcanieva is going to commit suicide, I can't prevent him: if he's not, he won't, and I need not disturb myself.'"

"Of course, I beg you to understand that I have no reason to suppose that Bridget is seriously in love with this Russian," I hastened to interpose, ashamed to have her spoken of in connection with such a disreputable fellow.

"Nonsense, you have every reason. Why shouldn't a fascinating adventurer be expected to captivate a lady? We are ready enough to be captivated by the charming adventuress, I confess. My dear simple Paddy, Providence instituted men and women to prove the weakness of both. The women fool us, and we fool them,—sometimes a little more tragically. And for my part, I will own that it is a very pleasant world while the process of fooling is going on."

This philosophising did not tend to lighten my burden, or help me to a conclusion upon the particular form

of fooling that was threatening to make permanent havoc of my domestic happiness, and what was more, permanent havoc of Bridget's life. What in the name of all the devils of the imagination was I to do with this impossible Russian? How was I to find out anything about him beyond that which he himself chose to tell me, which was singularly little, I thought, after a quick retrospective glance. Flattered by his extreme foreignness of aspect and the distant climes he suggested, we had opened our hearts to him and been glad enough to accept the fellow upon his own valuation; and there he was, a discomposing presence. If there was a mystery, as Lumley cheerfully suggested, how was I, a man of incurious habits, to get at the bottom of it?

We walked the streets, and puffed our pipes, and paused, and talked. We talked and walked and paused and puffed again, without arriving at any conclusion. "The devil take women and love and all nonsense of that sort," I finally exploded, and turned on my heel.

My seven-and-twenty years had not yet been disturbed by any semblance of worry. A placid individual, of moderate income and inexpensive tastes, with the constant congenial companionship of marriage without its drawbacks, I felt I was the least fitted of mortals to be confronted with acute mental distress. It made me nervous and disposed to swear, a habit very foreign to me; and when I got back to Donnybrook, I let myself in quietly, resolved not to see Bridget again that night. I pushed open the door of the front drawing-room which was not closed, wanting a book I had left there that morning. There was light in the back room, and through the folding-doors I saw a picture that took the blood from my face and sent

it buzzing and tingling in an unaccountable way through my veins. Bridget was standing with both hands clasped upon Arcanieva's shoulder, her head bent upon them in an unmistakable attitude of surrender. One of Arcanieva's arms was round her waist and the other hand held her pretty head, over which his own was bent in the unmistakable attitude of conqueror. I turned away and softly closed the door.

I feared to meet Bridget's eye next day. I felt somehow shabby because I knew by accident more than she supposed me to know, and hurried away from the breakfast-table without giving her time to speak, more troubled and more distressed than ever. I had hitherto never taken anything more than an abstract interest in the question of love: I liked women in a passionless unaspiring way, and was always glad of any little chance kindness flung at me like an unowned and unexpectant dog; but I was now for the first time made conscious that nobody had ever yet entertained a passion for me. Perhaps if I had not had Bridget, I might have gone forth boldly in search of the volcanic element; but now the thought unnerved me, and made me agitated and strangely dissatisfied.

"The mischief take that Russian!" I muttered. "A man has no business to be so handsome, so abominably Byronic and romantic-looking."

My reflections were interrupted by Lumley's head thrust in through the office-door. "Your affair is done, Paddy," he cried excitedly. "This morning I had the queerest visitor in the world. Whom do you think? Inspector Macarthy! He sat in my room chatting about the weather and Home Rule, and I kept asking myself under my breath what the devil he could want with me. Suddenly the cat was out of the bag. He showed

me a likeness, and asked me if I were acquainted with the original. "Arcanieva!" I exclaimed. 'Exactly,' said Macarthy, as cool as a cucumber. 'Your Mr. Arcanieva is a Polish forger of the name of Canaski. The London police have been on his track for some time; they traced him to Paris, and then lost sight of him.'"

"Don't tell me anything more, for God's sake!" I cried, shrinking from the degradation of Bridget's lover. "I'm sorry, I am indeed. He is a brilliant fellow, whoever and whatever he may be else. I dare say he had desperate provocation. At any rate, I would like to beg a favour from you, Lumley."

"Ask it, Paddy," said Lumley, in a voice of curious gentleness.

"There is no need for our rudely destroying Bridget's illusion, is there?" I inquired.

I knew that Lumley loved her, and glanced timidly at him. He drew back a little, and bent his eyes upon the floor. "None, Paddy, if you have serious reason to believe that it would be a pain to her."

"I have. We will say that he is a Nihilist. She will then be able to remember him as a misguided but disinterested young man. Use your influence with the Press."

"I will, Paddy. But you had better have your paper left here for a couple of days,—by accident, you know." He rose, and stood with both hands clasped upon the knob of his walking-stick, staring at me wistfully. "Is it true then, Paddy, quite true, that she loves Arcanieva?"

"Quite true," I answered sighing.

"Poor girl, poor girl! Oh, Paddy, most unwise Paddy! And here have I been faithful all these years without the courage to speak. I think I took a sort of æsthetic pleasure in her pretty pink and white serenity. Well, well, we are fools even when we seem wise.

But, Paddy, if by and by things should change with her, I expect you to be on my side."

"Oh, Lumley, to you only could I give her, and feel the pain of her going diminished by the thought of your happiness! You may depend upon me."

We grasped hands, and as I turned to leave him at the door, Arcanieva stood there, with a blanched and hunted aspect, trembling in every limb.

"Paddy," he whispered, and excitement coloured his pronunciation with a strong foreign tone and accentuated his natural lisp. "Can I speak to you?"

"Good-bye, Lumley. Come inside, Mr. Arcanieva." He followed me into the office, and I pointed to a chair.

"Paddy," he continued, in the same strongly excited voice, clasping his hands together in a way that suggested the possibility of his falling on his knees before me, "I do implore you, my dear brother, for are you not the brother of her I love?" He saw me wince and frown, and tactfully skirted that theme. "Something happened a year ago when I was in London. I was greatly tempted. I was only the tool of a very powerful man, who has given me up now to screen himself. Help me, Paddy, to get away unmolested and safe."

"I will help you," I said, emptying my pockets of all the money about me. "You will take the first train to Wicklow from Harcourt Street. We will start at once. At Wicklow I will send you on to Wexford. There you must drive to Waterford and catch a boat to Milford Haven thence on to Southampton. Then you can get to Havre, and make your way south."

He stretched out his hand, caught mine and pressed it feverishly to his lips.

"Don't do that, Arcanieva," I shouted, with the same feeling of revolt that the clammy touch of a reptile would have roused within me. "There is no question of gratitude or service rendered through personal good-will. You have been a serious trouble to me of late,—I dare say you know why,—and I am frankly glad of the excuse of assisting you out of the country. I wish to know nothing about your past or your future; your present has been enough. We will drive to the bank. Let me request that you will sit well back and keep your collar about your neck; and above all, don't talk."

In silence we drove to the bank, where I provided myself with money, then to Harcourt Street, just in time to catch a train to Wicklow. We were fortunate enough to procure a carriage to ourselves, and we sat opposite one another not once exchanging a word. I could feel that poor Arcanieva's eyes were wistfully upon me, but I kept mine averted. It was a pain to me to see him, to hear him, to be in his society. I restricted myself to the latter pain, thinking the while of Bridget and of her flushed and happy face that morning, the overflowing agitation of thrilled senses making itself felt around her; and then I painted to my aching vision the blank look, the grieved arch of the delicate eyebrows, the wet lashes and shaking lips that to-night would replace the rosy bliss of the morning. How long would it be before I could ask her to listen to Lumley? And how honest his big brown head and his full frank glance seemed after the deception of such beauty as that which faced me!

"Tell Bridget that I adore her

and that my heart is broken," said Arcanieva as we parted at Wicklow; and upon my conscience there were real tears in the fellow's voice as well as tears upon his long lashes.

"I will not deliver any such message, Arcanieva," I said harshly; and then repenting me of my cruelty, I put out my hand and said, more gently: "I'm very sorry for you, Arcanieva. I cannot see why a man so brilliantly endowed as you are should not have been able to walk straight. You were clever enough to have seen the pitfall you were making for yourself, and I am most profoundly shocked to think of qualities like yours being now to you no more useful as far as regards honourable achievement than weeds to a gardener. You have enough money to take you from Havre to America, and that is what I advise you to do. If in the future I can be of any service to you, do not hesitate to write to me; you know why, but we will not speak of it. Write to the office; good-bye and good luck."

I stood and watched him jump into the carriage; and still stood and watched him as he leaned out of the window and waved his hat to me. The craven terrified air had left him, and he had regained his old polished assurance and romantic tranquillity of aspect. A beam of sunshine slanted right across his eyes, and I took it for a good omen as his farewell glance flashed out of it, luminous and deep and softly smiling, as I had first seen it at the Athenæum.

Sorrowfully then did I retrace my steps to the Dublin Station, and went back to unaccustomed trouble,—to Bridget and the terror of Bridget's sorrow.



## THE BATTLES OF THE NIVE.

WHICH were the battles of the Nive? This is a question often asked, but not always answered offhand even by soldiers. Tough fights and stubborn engagements, giving opportunities for many a gallant deed, and scope for much tactical skill on the part of two great captains, we know they were; but when we read the words Nive and Nivelle on the monument of some old Peninsular hero, long since passed away, memory is apt to bring back but slowly the exact site and circumstance of these masterful and glorious tugs of war.

A knowledge of the ground, annually renewed, may perhaps enable the writer to recall some of the more interesting incidents of these obstinate conflicts. In the south-west corner of France, where it abuts upon Spain, two rivers rising in the Pyrenees empty themselves into the Bay of Biscay within fourteen miles of one another. The intervening coast-line is prettily dotted at intervals with the villages of Biarritz, Bidart, Gue-thary, and St. Jean-de-Luz, in the order named, the last-mentioned ranking as a town and being nearest the Spanish frontier, marked by the Bidassoa, which is six and a half miles distant. These two rivers are the Nive and the Nivelle, the former mingling its green mountain-waters with the muddy and sluggish Adour in the picturesque old fortress of Bayonne, four miles above the spot where it rolls itself over a dangerous bar into the sea; while the latter debouches at the picturesque but low-lying town of St. Jean-de-Luz, the scene of many historical events, and

a hundred years ago, when the whale disported himself in the great bay, the seat of a thriving fishing industry.

In the year 1813 Biarritz was an insignificant fishing-village situated in a hollow between two green cliffs on the sea-shore; but even then it was in vogue as a bathing-place among the wealthy dames of Bayonne and its neighbourhood, who had to choose between horse, mule, or donkey-back, either in saddle or *cacolets*, to compass the five miles of sand and swamp which divide Bayonne from Biarritz, for in those days roads were not in existence. The last-named was the favourite mode of travel, as the panniers, slung one on each side a mule, afforded a comfortable opportunity for dame and damozel to chat over the gossip of the day, while leisurely ambling towards the shore and a Gascon sunset, than which there is none more beautiful.

Since those days Biarritz has spread from the little hollow over the surrounding heights, and covered the neighbouring country with pretty villas and well-built houses in their own grounds, which a genial climate keeps ever fresh and gay with flowers and shrubs. The dark pine-woods, planted by the French Emperor a generation ago, form an agreeable contrast to the glittering sandy beach, and afford a welcome shade for the evening drive, or walk, towards the mouth of the Adour. Two railways communicate with Bayonne: our countrymen will find an English Club and good golf-links; and there are also half a dozen large hotels, including the favourite villa (now called the

Palace Hotel) of the Empress Eugenie, who gave the first impulse to the little Basque hamlet so near her own native land. What a contrast is all this to the Subaltern's description of the place when he fought, with the gallant Eighty-Fifth, in the battles of the Nive hard by!

The little village then lay between, and on the flank of, the English and French armies when Soult, in front of Bayonne, faced Wellington on the ridge of Bidart, and although outside the line of actual fighting was visited by the mounted patrols of both armies. Small and dangerous as it was, however, the Subaltern and his friends seem to have got no little amusement out of it, mixed with a spice of exhilarating adventure. "It was distinguished," he tells us, "as the residence of two or three handsome women. These ladies had about them all the gaiety and liveliness of Frenchwomen with a good deal of the sentimentality of our own fair countrywomen; to us they were particularly pleasant, professing, I know not how truly, to prefer our society to that of any persons besides; and we of course were far too gallant to deny them that gratification. Two or three times in each week the favoured few mounted their horses and took the road to Biarritz, from which on more than one occasion they with difficulty returned." Speaking of one of these visits he says: "We were for the most part prudent enough to cast lots in order to decide on whom the odious task should devolve of watching outside to prevent surprise by the enemy's cavalry. So many visits had, however, been paid without any alarm being given, that one morning we rashly determined to run all risks rather than that one of the three should spend an hour cheerlessly by himself. The only precaution which we took was to pique our horses ready saddled and

bridled at the garden-gate instead of putting them up. We had sat about half an hour with our fair friends, and had just ceased to joke on the probability of our suffering the fate of Samson and being caught by the Philistines, when our ears were saluted with the sound of horses' hoofs upon the paved streets. We sprang to the window and beheld eight or ten French hussars riding slowly from the lower end of the town; whilst we were hesitating how to proceed we observed a rascal run up to the leader of the patrol and, entering into conversation with him, point to the abode of our new acquaintances. This was hint enough; without pausing to say farewell to our fair friends, who screamed as if they, and not we, had been in danger, we ran to our horses, and springing into the saddle applied the spur with very little mercy. We were none of us particularly well mounted, but either our pursuers had alighted to search the house, or they took at first a wrong direction, for we got so much the start of them before the chase fairly began that possibly we might have escaped as far as the piquets. Of this, however, I am by no means certain, for they were unquestionably gaining upon us when by great good fortune a patrol of our own cavalry made its appearance. Then indeed the tables were turned; the enemy pulled up, paused for an instant, and took to their heels, whilst our troopers, who had trotted forward as soon as they saw what was the matter, put their horses to the speed and followed . . . we soon found that we were distanced by both parties."

There was plenty of game, too, in the neighbourhood, and his dogs and guns, as well as his fair friends, found ample occupation for the British Subaltern during the intervals of fighting. Nor does there seem to have

been any difficulty about leave, in consequence, no doubt, of the good understanding between the outposts of both armies, which were of a friendly and even familiar character when no movement was on foot. An English field-officer of the night, for instance, going his rounds missed an entire piquet, but hearing sounds from a cottage in front, he cautiously peeped in and saw his own men having a friendly carouse with their French enemies, to whom, under the officer's peremptory orders, they wished a cheery *au revoir*, and returned to their post in the English line. The Subaltern himself, who was a future Chaplain-General, received on one occasion a present of brandy sent by some French officers across the short space of neutral ground separating the outposts, with a request for some tea in return, which was duly handed to their messenger and acknowledged by many salutes across the ravine. The soldiers, too, had their own signs by holding up their muskets in different positions; and a skirmish was often avoided, says a French writer, by this means, when some small knoll or rising ground in front was wanted and would be taken if not given up. Then a signal would be made from the advancing skirmishers, and the ground would, if not considered of sufficient importance to fight for, be vacated by the enemy and promptly taken possession of by the opposing force; so well did men inured to daily fighting understand the worthlessness of unnecessary combats.

Wellington had at this time driven Soult before him through the fastnesses of the Pyrenees, forced the passage of the Bidassoa in the teeth of the French army lining the heights on the right bank, and on the 9th of October, 1813, looked down upon the fair fields of France from the top of

the mountain of Larrhun<sup>1</sup> which commands a view of the whole country up to the very walls of Bayonne, and far beyond them. It is the most prominent object in the landscape for many a mile, and its commanding height of close on three thousand feet, with a rocky hermitage, assumed to be impregnable, on the top, made it a position of paramount importance. After a failure to capture the crest of this great watch-tower on the first day, the third morning saw the Union Jack floating from the hermitage, which, notwithstanding its altitude, was quickly garnished with a battery of English guns.

The beautiful Nivelle, like a silver streak, threads its way at the foot of the mountain on the French side through the surrounding hills, till it reaches the sea at St. Jean-de-Luz some six miles lower down. The French were strongly entrenched on both sides of the river, every hill-top and crag being defended by redoubt, earthwork, entrenchment, or abbati, every valley and path obstructed. But here again Soult had to give way a month later, when from the pinnacle of Peña Plata<sup>2</sup> flashed forth the signal gun on that sunny morning of November, which launched ninety-five thousand men and ninety guns on the French line of the Nivelle.

A magnificent sight it must have been to see every slope, as far as the eye could reach, occupied by the glittering bayonets of the allied troops, as they descended the mountain sides and rugged paths, while the summits of Larrhun and its neighbours belched

<sup>1</sup> A month elapsed between the capture of the Great Larrhun and the little mountain of that name standing near it, which was taken on the 10th of November following.

<sup>2</sup> In Basque *Aitzchubia*, or white rock, called by the Spaniards *Peña Plata*, or silver rock; it is a conical peaked mountain, easily distinguishable from its neighbours.

forth shot and shell from guns two thousand feet above the combatants below, and awoke the reverberating echoes of the surrounding hills with a deafening roar. Nothing was wanting in the pomp and circumstance of war; and, as if to complete the pageant, the fleet, cruising off the mouth of the river, threw shells at intervals into Soult's works on the coast. Tough, weather-beaten veterans were they who descended to the fight, and little likely to brook refusal at any point. "Kill or be killed, and they little care which," is said to have been the verdict of Wellington on such of them as lived to fight and win the last great action at Toulouse three months later. They did not belie their appearance. The French were driven back at all points over a front of nine miles; fifty-one of their guns were captured, and the little river triumphantly crossed at every bridge and ford, the allied troops then pushing on to the heights on the French side. But the Nivelle was not passed without great loss. Five hundred brave men of the allies bit the dust that day, and two thousand four hundred men were wounded, including Generals Byng and Kemp; while Soult out of his seventy thousand men lost four thousand two hundred and sixty-five, including fourteen hundred prisoners.

The French works were in three lines, immensely strong, and such, in the words of a distinguished officer on the spot, as men ought to have defended for ever. "Day after day," says Napier, "for more than a month entrenchment had arisen over entrenchment, covering the vast slopes of mountains which were scarcely accessible from their natural steepness and asperity. This they [the allies] could see, yet cared neither for the growing strength of the works, the height of the mountains, nor the

breadth of the river with its heavy sands and its mighty rushing tide; all were despised."<sup>1</sup> Southey naturally remarks that the French relied, in addition, upon the difficulty of the ground, not dreaming that artillery could be brought to act over rivers, rocks, and mountains. Guns, on swivel-carriages harnessed on the backs of mules, were conveyed to the ridges of the mountains and brought to bear on the French from positions which they had considered inaccessible for artillery; and the gunners dragged their cannon with ropes up steep precipices or lowered them down wherever they could be employed with most effect. This description, together with the fact that the French defended the hermitage on Larrhun by rolling down vast rocks and stones on the attackers, may well remind us of the heroic little Chitral campaign of to-day.

In the Lonsdale Manuscripts is a letter from the grandfather of the present Earl who was then serving in a cavalry regiment, in which he says, after going over the ground: "From the very strong positions the enemy held you would not have thought it possible for troops to have got possession of the heights, as strongly fortified as they were, in so short a time; their works are innumerable and immensely strong, and for many miles in rear of where the attack commenced, the ground afforded them the greatest resistance against our troops by a chain of hills which are scarcely more than seven hundred yards apart, and at the top of each hill were strong batteries." Soult himself,

<sup>1</sup> The tide, however, makes as far as Ascain only, which does not embrace more than a third of the length of the fighting-line at the Nivelle, but is not fordable up to that point. On the high ground opposite Ascain on the right bank of the Nivelle was the fortified French camp of Serres, not to be confounded with Sare.

writing to the French War Minister on the 19th of November, expresses his astonishment at his defeat in these words: "I never should have believed before the event that the divisions of General Clausel could have been forced in the position behind Sare, and in that of the Petite-Rhune, which they were charged to defend. These events are outside all rules of calculation. The enemy ought to have lost twenty-five thousand men in possessing themselves of them. I can then only regret that they obtained them so cheaply, after all the trouble it had cost us to render them impregnable." The French, however, blame Soult, and attribute their defeat to a too extended position, and to the fact of the reserves having been placed too far from the intended point of attack (Amotz), which Clerc and other French writers declare to have been well known to them; but when such a soldier as Soult could write in such a strain the victory must indeed have been surprising and complete.

To thoroughly appreciate, however, the military genius of Wellington on the one hand and the misfortunes of Soult on the other, these rugged mountains should be personally visited. The present writer, who fishes the Nivelle in the early spring of each year, often pictures to himself, when resting over his mid-day sandwich on its banks, the many gallant deeds of his countrymen which the little stream was witness to more than eighty years ago. The Forty-Third opened the ball by carrying innumerable stone breast-works on the little Larrhun, then coolly halted under fire after half-an-hour's work to get breath before assaulting at the bayonet's point the first of a series of stone castles which had taken the French six weeks to perfect. One French grenadier officer only, we are told, dared to brave the rush; standing alone on the high wall

and flinging down stones with both hands until he fell, a noble figure, while his men sought safety among the rocks on either flank. Castle after castle was taken before the Forty-Third again paused for breath ere they stormed the last great over-towering work called the Donjon, which was protected by a natural ditch or fissure in the rock fifteen feet deep. Waiting for their friends on the flanks but for a few moments, with a triumphant shout they jumped into the cleft, and, scaling the opposing walls, sent flying eight hundred of Soult's oldest soldiers. Their blood was up, and the deed was done; but the price was a heavy one, for eleven officers and sixty-seven men lay dead or wounded on the ground.

Then the Riflemen dropped down perpendicularly from the greater Rhune and seized the crags below. A little later still the gallant Fifty Second, led by the keen-sighted Colborne,<sup>1</sup> found itself in front of the signal redoubt, which was surrounded by a palisaded ditch thirty feet deep and held by six hundred of the enemy. To storm it was impossible, but a mistaken order to attack it, given by a staff officer (as at Balaklava), left Colborne no option, for at such a moment men's better judgment has to be put aside. Three times did he throw himself on the work at different points, and three times were his leading ranks mown down to a man by withering volleys at point-blank range, himself escaping by some miracle. Then, moving his regiment under cover of the brow of the hill, he advanced alone with a white handkerchief, summoned the French com-

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards created Baron Seaton, and Field-Marshal, for his services. He was previously Sir John Moore's military secretary, and at Waterloo, we are told, he originated and led the decisive movement of the Fifty-Second, which helped so much to the victory. The present Lord Seaton is his grandson.



mandant, explained to him that he was surrounded and his position hopeless, and thereupon the latter surrendered with the loss of one man only, while the Fifty-Second left two hundred heroes on the ground. Well may this battle of the Nivelle be described as a splendid spectacle of war; and well may Lord Wellington, with such men to command, have been "all gaiety and spirits" at his dinner-table on the previous evening, and lightly remarked to his Judge-Advocate-General at parting, "Remember! at four in the morning."

France had been entered; and now commenced a period of plunder and rapine, especially among the Spanish and Portuguese troops, who, it must be remembered, had in this respect many and grievous scores to pay off. Nor were the English troops by any means free from the prevailing vice. Wellington, seeing the importance of stamping out this propensity, had already sent several officers who had countenanced marauding back to England, there to be dealt with by the Prince Regent; and on the very day of the battle he hanged two offenders on the nearest trees, causing notices to be pinned on their breasts stating in French and Basque the crime for which such summary justice had been executed. But notwithstanding all this, looting and license were the disorders of the day. One Portuguese soldier, who had good reason for retaliation, was seen coming from a house. "We ran up," says the Subaltern, "and found a poor old French peasant lying dead at the bottom of the garden; a bullet had passed through his head, and his thin gray hairs were dyed with his own blood. On entering we saw an old woman, the wife of the peasant, lying dead in the kitchen. The desperate Portuguese did not attempt to deny having perpetrated

these murders; he seemed on the contrary wound up to a pitch of frenzy. 'They murdered my father,' said he, 'they cut my mother's throat, and they ravished my sister before my eyes, and I vowed at the time I would put to death the first French family that fell into my hands; you may hang me if you will, but I have kept my oath, and care not for dying.' Such a terrible crime of vengeance admits of no palliation, but if any man could advance extenuating circumstances, surely it was this misguided Caçadore. He was hanged at sundown. Wellington had promised the natives protection for their persons and property, and he was determined to enforce it. Many Spanish marauders, caught in the act, were promptly hanged (for these were the men whose cruel reprisals the French peasants most feared); but finding the Spanish generals slow to carry out his orders, he did not hesitate to resort to the extreme measure of sending back the Spanish army beyond the Pyrenees; thus depriving himself of twenty-five thousand men at a moment when he badly required them for his future movements, and explaining his reasons to the Spanish General Murillo in these scathing words: "I do not believe that the union of the two nations depends on pillage, but if it does, I declare for one that I desire neither the command nor the continuation of such a bond founded on plunder. I have lost twenty thousand men in this campaign, and I have not done so in order that either General Murillo, or any other general, should come here to pillage the French peasants, and as long as I command I will not permit it; if you are resolved to pillage, look out for another commander than me, for as long as I am at your head, I declare aloud I will not permit it. . . . I am altogether indifferent whether I

command a large or a small army, but be it large or small, it must obey me, and there must be no pillage." By these means order was re-established with an iron hand. All supplies were scrupulously paid for in hard dollars; and the peasantry, when they understood that British discipline would afford the security which it was in vain to hope for amid their own armies, returned to their villages, and English coin and integrity succeeded in revealing stores of subsistence, which all the rigour of French requisitions had been unable to discover. This fact is fully confirmed in an intercepted French official letter from Bayonne at the time. "The English General's policy," it observes, "and the good discipline he maintains do us more harm than ten battles; every peasant wishes to be under his protection." On one day alone, in December, 1813, three thousand inhabitants passed through the English lines on their return to St. Jean-de-Luz, where Wellington's headquarters then were.

Heavy rain having now made the roads and country lanes impassable, the army gained a little breathing-time, and we may read in the Judge Advocate's journal such pleasant reminiscences of the short holiday as these: "Lord Wellington and his gentlemen were out to-day with the hounds; he told me that I kept him up reading courts-martial until twelve o'clock at night or one in the morning, and this every night. Send me some law news, for he expects me to tell him who all the new judges are to be, &c., and is very fond of discussing legal subjects." . . . "Last time I dined at head-quarters Lord Wellington got into a long conversation with me, for nearly two hours, about the Poor Laws, and the assize of bread; about the Catholic question, and the state of Ireland, &c., just as if he

had nothing else upon his mind. . . . He is still alarmed at the separation spirit which he thinks exists there, and the remains of a Jacobin feeling in the lower classes in England."

. . . . "The other day a Portuguese brigade had a field-day close to the river in the meadows and all the French came down to look at them, whilst on the other hand in the meadows on the French side the French conscripts are brought down to be drilled; sometimes five or six squads are seen at once, and any one of the sergeants might be knocked on the head all the time by our sentries; but this is now all well understood, and we thus quietly bully or bravado each other." Finally we learn this important piece of news as to the commissariat department: "Lord Wellington's table is now very good in every respect, and I think his aides-de-camp will be ill with excess, unless there is a move, especially if the roads remain too bad for exercise; he has now three cooks, and an English and Spanish chief share the command, and, by dividing the days, vie with each other."

Wellington was now between the two rivers Nivelle and Nive, his left resting on the sea with Bayonne and the Nive in his front, while the latter, bending round his right flank, enclosed him in a restricted area bounded in the rear by the Nivelle and the mountains. Sare, and the little ivy-covered bridge of Amotz, the objective point of the day's fighting (which spans, by the way, the best bit of trout-fishing on the river), had been carried, and the allies had occupied the third line of formidable heights which the French had fortified but failed to hold. Soult had therefore retired towards Bayonne and his entrenched camp outside its walls, some eight miles distant. Here he had taken up a fresh line on the

high ground near the present railway-station at Biarritz, called La Negresse, extending to the Nive and up the further (right) bank of that river to Cambo, the Richmond of Biarritz, where he held the bridges and a *tête-du-pont* on the left, or English, side.

Now commenced that manœuvring and series of combats, as soon as the bad weather and heavy country permitted, which after five days' fighting came to a brilliant climax in Hill's great action of St. Pierre, one of the bloodiest battles of the Peninsular War. These were called the battles of the Nive, and an afternoon walk from Biarritz will take the stranger to the site of any one of them. But how little does the average English traveller know that, when he steps out on to the platform at Biarritz, he is on the very spot between the two lakes (Brindos and Morisco) where Wellington and Soult contended in attack and counter-attack with small advantage to either side, but which dyed the heather and the furze with the blood of many an Englishman. Their remains still lie in the gardens and rough ground hereabout, some marked and known, and yet others unknown or forgotten. Colonel R. Lloyd, Eighty-Fourth Regiment, is commemorated by a tablet outside the little Basque church of Bidart; Lt.-Colonel Martin and Captains Thompson and Watson of the Guards lie hard by in the unkempt little garden of what we call the mayor's house, but more correctly the Château Laborde, and the wild roses still surround the stone which marks their quiet resting-place. Many more, too, rest in the churchyard of Arcangues.

Wellington was uneasy at Soult having command of the bridges at Cambo, and especially of the *tête-du-pont* on the left bank of the Nive, from which an attack might be made

at any moment on his right flank. On the 16th of November therefore he directed Hill to reconnoitre and threaten the bridge-head. Soult had given orders to the officer in command to hold it as long as he could, but if hard pressed, to retire across the river and blow up the work and the bridges behind him; these directions he carried out with great alacrity, for Hill had no sooner shown himself than the work and bridges were at once destroyed without a blow being struck in their defence. This was exactly what Wellington wanted, for it placed the Nive between his right flank and the enemy, and he was now therefore free to complete his preparations and to choose his own time for a further advance.

In addition to following up his adversary he had two reasons for determining to cross the Nive. Hitherto he had received his supplies chiefly from our fleet and transports on the coast, as the resources of this mountain-district were limited; but he wished to tap the richer fields of Basque and Bearnais by opening a wider area for operations than the limited triangle on which he rested, and, above all, to force back the enemy from Bayonne and his magazines, to that sterile country of the Landes which, half swamp, half desert, produces nothing but turpentine, pine-wood, and a few wild boar, and where to this day the railway traveller from Bordeaux may see the inhabitants going about their ordinary occupations on stilts.

The outposts of the allies held the ridge called Barrouilhet on the left of the Biarritz station entering from Bayonne; their right was on the Nive, and their left at Bidart, the church and village of Arcangues being about two miles in rear, and the centre of the position. The gallant Sir Rowland Hill commanded the right wing near Cambo: Beresford led the centre near

Ustaritz ; and the left was under Sir John Hope, a man of great stature, possessing that supreme courage which, if occasionally rashly displayed, is none the less admirable.<sup>1</sup>

The French outposts were on the opposite ridge, on the right of the railway, covering Bayonne. After several preliminary skirmishes in which Generals Watson and Vandeleur were wounded, on the 9th of December, everything being ready, a beacon fire on the craggy summit of the Mondarain gave at daybreak the signal for a thundering cannonade from Hill's and Beresford's guns at Cambo and Ustaritz, which bellowed down the valley of the Nive for many a mile. Under cover of this fire their respective divisions gallantly forced the passage of the river, the men up to their arm-pits in water, and drove back the enemy on the opposite bank ; the bridges were then quickly repaired, and wheeling round to their left, the two divisions in conjunction swept down the right bank, and after severe fighting captured Villefranque, and the heights above it, some four miles only from Bayonne.

Hope, who had to create a diversion on the left to prevent Hill and Beresford being overwhelmed in their crossing, had nine miles to march from St. Jean-de-Luz. He accordingly put his troops in motion during the night, and dividing his force on the Barrouilhet ridge, passed one half between the lakes, and the other by the sea and Biarritz ; then, covered by a cloud of skirmishers and his guns, he swung round to his right and drove back the French through Anglet up to the very earthworks of their entrenched camp. Having done this, and seen Soult's dispositions on the

Adour between Bayonne and the sea, and having left a Portuguese brigade as outposts, he retraced his steps in deep mud and heavy rain, his men having been twenty-four hours under arms. Hope's right connected with Alten, who on his part also pushed back the French from the Bussussary plateau, which is a continuation in front of Arcangues of the Barrouilhet ridge towards the Nive. Strange to say, Hope and Alten lost more men than Hill and Beresford in their more difficult operation of crossing the river ; the total loss being eight hundred on each side.

Soult, now seeing the allied army divided by a tidal river, perceived his opportunity to attack either wing of it with all his force. Nettled at losing the river, and at the audacity of Hope's attack, which was made without any sufficient reserve within supporting distance, he promptly determined to deliver a crushing reply. Writing therefore to the War-Minister to expect good news on the morrow, he led sixty thousand men and forty guns against the allies' left of thirty thousand men and twenty-four guns.

The country is uneven and rugged, cut up with ravine and ridge, wood and watercourse, copse and swamp, and intersected by deep and muddy cart-roads. Behind the ridge of Barrouilhet, on which stands the mayor's house not half-a-mile from the railway station, is a rough and partially wooded valley dividing it and the Bussussary plateau from Arcangues church, the key of the position at which Soult aimed. The attack was, curiously enough, unexpected. Wellington was on the other side of the Nive with Hill, and his troops were not disposed for battle on the left bank. Soult, fortunately for the allies, at the last moment divided his attack, the left under Clausel being made on the Bussussary

<sup>1</sup> For his services he was created Baron Niddry, but eventually succeeded to the family honours of Hopetoun, and the present Earl is his great-grandson.

plateau, and the right under Ryle, passing between the lakes, on the Barrouilhet ridge and mayor's house ; but both aiming at the rough amphitheatre behind the ridges and round Arcangues, the bottom of which is bisected by a small tributary of the Nive in a deep gully. The piquets of the Light Division were in front of Clausel, and these he attacked with unusual fury and overwhelming numbers, his men rushing on with loud yells. Kempt, who commanded the outposts and suspected the onslaught, placed what reserve he had in the church and chateau of Arcangues ; but so sudden and fierce was the attack that the French broke through the line of piquets, got between the Forty-Third and Fifty-Second, and intercepted a hundred men of the former and of the Rifles, before they could double back. Then, sword in hand, Ensign Campbell and fifty men with a ringing cheer burst through their enemies and joined the reassembled piquets, who on reaching the more open ground in the basin turned round and with shouts and execrations defied their foes. Clausel brought up twelve guns on to the Bussussary plateau which played with murderous effect at short range on Arcangues church, where there were two mountain-guns only to reply ; but the musketry-fire luckily just reached the French guns, and kept them behind the ridge. An attempt to carry the church by assault was hurled back by the gallant defenders. The reserves were at this time far in the rear at Guethary, St. Jean-de-Luz, and the hill of St. Barbe. Wellington hurried across the Nive to order them up, and Soult, seeing the heads of the columns, suspended the attack for a time. Then, writes Alison : " Just before dark two fresh divisions having arrived, Clausel made a fresh attack on the village of Arcangues, and the allies were so worn out

and reduced in number by incessant fighting all day, that the village and chateau were both carried ; the Portuguese broke and fled, and some of the British regiments began to waver. At that moment Wellington himself rode up to the troops at the foot of the church. ' You must keep your ground, my lads,' said he ; ' there is nothing behind you ; *charge !*' Instantly a loud shout was raised, the fugitives on the flanks rallied and re-formed, a volley was poured in, the bayonets levelled, and the enemy were driven, still obstinately fighting, out of the village and chateau which remained in possession of the British."

Ryle's troops were delayed by the muddy lanes, a most fortunate circumstance for the allies ; and it was midday before he threw himself on the Barrhouilhet ridge and mayor's chateau. Here the fighting was desperate and hand to hand in the thickets and woods around, small detached parties cutting their way through and others repulsed, while no one knew what was going on to his right or left. The towering figure of Sir John Hope might be seen wherever the fire was thickest, encouraging his men by word and yet more by example. He was wounded in the ankle, his clothes riddled with bullets, and all his Staff hit ; nevertheless he refused to leave the field, and by his intrepidity, says Napier, he restored the battle. At one period of the fight he went into the mayor's house to see from an upper window what the enemy were about, when suddenly the house was surrounded. Sir John, seeing what had happened, threw himself upon his horse and at the head of his mounted attendants charged from the doorway of the courtyard ; he received no fewer than three musket-balls through his hat, and his horse was so severely wounded that its strength



served only to carry him to a place of safety. But the charge was decisive; many of the French were sabred and the little party escaped. Wellington thus writes of Hope after these battles: "I have long entertained the highest opinion of Sir John Hope, in common, I believe, with the whole world, but every day's experience convinces me of his worth. We shall lose him, however, if he continues to expose himself in fire as he has done in the last three days; indeed his escape was then wonderful. His hat and coat were shot through in many places, besides the wound in his leg. He places himself among the sharpshooters, without, as they do, sheltering himself from the enemy's fire. This will not answer; and I hope that his friends will give him a hint on the subject. I have spoken to McDonald about it, and I will to Sir John Hope himself, if I should find a favourable opportunity; but it is a delicate subject."<sup>1</sup>

A notable action was performed during this fight by the brave Cameron and the Ninth Regiment, who had so greatly distinguished themselves at the crossing of the Bidassoa. They were on the right of the mayor's house, a Portuguese regiment being between them and that building, and on their left front was a wood in which the enemy were constantly forming and rushing out on the line. In the *mêlée* a French regiment had slipped through, a few men at a time, between Cameron and the Portuguese, when the former suddenly saw them forming line to his left rear. Having failed to make another regiment behind him comprehend the critical situation, he faced about his men, and, leaving his skirmishers to maintain the line in front, marched back upon the French corps, and undeterred

by their volleys at close range, charged them with the bayonet in line. The French broke and fled, and most of them were made prisoners, whereupon Cameron, having disposed of the difficulty, coolly marched back to his former position. In this little episode, which could have occupied but a few minutes, the Ninth lost eighty officers and men. What praise can be too great for such veterans under such a leader?

The reserves eventually came up in hot haste, but the Guards from St. Jean-de-Luz did not join the battle until three o'clock in the afternoon; the Judge-Advocate's prediction, however, that "they will never learn their trade of being killed properly if they are thus nursed up in the rear," does not seem to have been at all verified. The enemy repeatedly renewed his onslaught, and darkness alone caused him sulkily to withdraw after a loss of two thousand men and a general wounded. The allies had twelve hundred killed and wounded, including two generals, and lost three hundred prisoners. So ended the second day's fighting; and it must be confessed that the Frenchman Pellot speaks with truth and moderation when he says, "Never did the enemy by his own confession find himself in a position so critical as on this day, and without the bad weather he would have been seriously compromised."

The next day (11th of December) opened with a thick fog. Wellington ordered Cameron and the brave Ninth to go forward between the lakes, then to bear to the right and see what the enemy were doing. Once more a mistaken or rash order by a staff-officer caused Cameron to enter the hamlet of Pucho where Soult had twenty-four thousand men. The Ninth had to fly precipitately, and were only saved from capture by Hope bringing up some Portuguese to their aid. This

<sup>1</sup> Hope was hit seven times, and again wounded and taken prisoner during the sortie from Bayonne some weeks later.

annoyed Soult, who instantly ordered Boyer's brigade to pursue, and fall on between the lakes. So quickly was this done that the British, who were out gathering fuel, had scarcely time to get under arms, while the Portuguese who were holding the Barrouilhet ridge were beaten back at all points. A confused fight of groups succeeded, until Aylmer's brigade came up; and the Ninth retrieved its morning's work by successfully plying Boyer's flank with such destructive volleys that Soult recalled him, though continuing a harassing cannonade until night put an end to the conflict with a loss of six hundred on each side.

On the following day the outposts, being still close together, showed considerable suspicion of one another, as was but natural. Soult reinforced his, which in an instant caused the English guns to open, and in less time than it takes to write it, both lines were in a blaze of musketry and cannon. This eventually lapsed into an artillery duel throughout the day, which uselessly consumed four hundred men on each side, and finished the fourth day's fighting.

The bulk of the allied army being now on the left of the Nive, Soult during the night transferred nearly the whole of his forces, by an interior bridge connecting his entrenched camps, to the right bank, designing to annihilate Hill on the morrow. On that memorable day, the fifth of the fighting, thirty-five thousand men were thrown upon Hill's fourteen thousand, and the bloody battle of St. Pierre was fought and won, which, though no regiment bears its name, yet left five thousand killed and wounded on a space of one mile square.

Thus ended the battles of the Nive,

with one of the most desperate actions of the whole war, an action which has been previously described in these columns.<sup>1</sup>

It may be said that Soult was more capable in planning his movements than skilful in carrying them out, better in strategy than in tactics; and it can hardly be doubted that had he persevered in his original intention on the second day, and thrown his whole force on either the Bussusary or Barrouilhet ridge, he must have penetrated the allied line, and driven a wedge between Hope and Beresford, thus dividing our force into three parts. He vacillated, however, just before he made his onslaught, and dividing his columns, both his attacks were successfully resisted. It would seem that Wellington considered himself completely master of the situation. Results eventually proved that he was right; but the margin between victory and defeat on November 10th was perilously narrow. The delay of Ryle by bad roads saved the allied left until supports came up; even then it was the soldiers, as at Inkerman, who saved the day. Thereafter, on the 11th and 12th, whenever Soult showed a disposition to attack, the head of Wellington's columns could be seen peeping over the ridges ready to meet him at the right point; in fact, Wellington seems to have divined and anticipated the intention of his adversary at every point.

Let the English visitor to Biarritz, when he scents the sweet daphne in his rambles over the rough ridges on which this wild flower still flourishes, reflect that its carmine has ere now been deepened by the blood of his compatriots.

<sup>1</sup> Under the title of *A FORGOTTEN FIGHT*, September, 1894.

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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## A BRIDE ELECT.

### CHAPTER VII.

"I HAD such a delightful travelling companion this afternoon," said Lady Sudeleigh to the table collectively, after Gregory had said grace and I had begun to ladle out the soup. "He got out at Lynncchester, and I understand he is a neighbour of yours, a Mr. Redworth."

"Our nearest neighbour," exclaimed Gregory. "Just across the way, in fact, at Coldhope."

"Well, I am deeply indebted to him, I can assure you; and perhaps I shall have the opportunity of thanking him again while I am here. Mathilde made some stupid mistake about the luggage at the junction, and we thought it had gone on in the wrong train. She is absolutely no use in travelling; as much charge, I tell her, as a child would be; and these north-country porters don't understand her broken English. I do not know what would have become of us if Mr. Redworth had not come to the rescue, really like a knight-errant succouring the distressed. After that he went on in my carriage to Lynncchester, and told me all sorts of odd things; I was greatly entertained."

"He is a very out-of-the-way person, and can make himself uncommonly interesting when he chooses. There

could be no doubt he would choose with you; and I am glad he was at hand to be of use."

"He did choose; but I took it for nature and not compliment. My only misgiving was whether he could be perfectly sane. It is, to say the least, unusual for a man in this nineteenth century of ours,—a man who bears the stamp of good society—to declare himself an alchemist! And he would not allow he was in jest; he insisted it was a serious science, and only the Arabian term for something of real practical import to all of us."

"I believe he is a clever experimental chemist, and, according to his own account, he has discovered some remarkable secrets in the ancient mystical literature, the writings of Paracelsus, and others even earlier. He told me on one occasion here that he was on the eve of giving them to the world."

"The philosopher's stone, I suppose, and the fountain of eternal youth. I should not mind having a dip in that fountain if he can produce it. The world has been a pleasant one to me in past years, and I am in no hurry to leave it, even now. Seriously, however, it does seem odd for a man like Mr. Redworth to give himself up to such researches. The craze must come in somewhere. Yes, he

talked about Paracelsus, and the impossibility of fathoming the true significance of those ancient writings without the fundamental key ; otherwise they appeared the wildest nonsense, all about green dragons and salt of vipers and such like. As I told him, I could well believe it."

"For my own part," said Gregory, "I think it not impossible that the manuscripts were so phrased as to be intelligible only to a certain sect. There was a great idea in those days of keeping the laity in ignorance ; and though our modern practice has got past all that, there was an element of wisdom in it, to my thinking. Nothing is so dangerous as a little knowledge in the power of the ignorant."

"Ah, when a clergyman begins to talk about the laity as a class by themselves, we can say nothing, we women. Can we, Miss Varney ? But I thought my charming friend a little peculiar on other points. What do you think he told me he had got with him, in a particular long wooden box of which he was very careful ?"

"I have not the least idea."

"I hope I shall not spoil any one's dinner if I tell you ; it was a human arm. It seems he attaches a great value to such trifles on account of experiments he is pursuing ; and having heard from the hospital authorities in York that an amputation was to take place, he attended to possess himself of the,—*memento mori* is not a right expression, I suppose, as they did not kill the man."

I said I understood from Mr. Redworth he was studying the Egyptian methods of embalming.

"It was not the Egyptian way he was explaining to me,—at least not what we have always understood by it, we ignorantfolk who are not alchemists. The Egyptians used to rub you with spices, did they not, and wind you in waxed cloths, and paint a picture

of you on the mummy-case ? I saw some queer specimens when I was at Cairo with Sir Richard. But Mr. Redworth's way, the alchemist's way, is something very superior. It is the injection of a fluid into the veins which arrests the change of death ; and if he is able to perfect the invention the body can be rendered absolutely indestructible except by fire. Curious idea, is it not ?"

"I have heard Redworth talk about it," returned Gregory ; "but he said he had not mastered the secret of complete diffusion. It needed the pulse of a living heart to circulate the fluid equally throughout the system. All he has accomplished yet has been temporary and partial."

"Yes ; he was abusing the Government because they would not give him a criminal ! Horrid idea, is it not ? And we are making Miss Varney and your niece look quite pale over it. I shall ask him when I see him how his arm is getting on. He told me he attended the operation, and injected this stuff the instant it was severed. But enough of Mr. Redworth ; tell me something about your church. Have you obtained the grant of funds you hoped for ?"

Lady Sudeleigh had talked on about our neighbour as if really interested, but I believe it was in part to cover the sad contrast between our present gathering round that table and what had been hoped for. She was one of those people who think the best way to treat a sorrow is to ignore it, and her ideal of consolation was oblivion. I have no doubt Barbara's disappearance was often a topic of conversation between her and Eleanor, but I am quite sure it was always on Eleanor's introduction. She was less reticent with me, but I never heard her approach the subject with Gregory, except on one occasion which I shall note hereafter. That first evening

when he said something about "our lost child" I saw her put out her thin hand sparkling with rings, and lay it on his with a momentary pressure while she turned away her face; so though silent, she could be sympathetic. I liked her; I confess that she fascinated me.

There was another whom she attracted, but the spell was of other weaving than her own. Janie never put herself forward into notice, but was ready with numberless little mute attentions, quick to anticipate every wish of Dick's mother. The great lady did not heed her much; she had been accustomed to take her at Eleanor's valuation as "only Janie Moorhouse," and I am sure she was quite unsuspecting of any warmer feeling towards her son. Dick came the day following her arrival,—or Richard, as his mother called him, for she never descended to diminutives; and I did not wonder the Sudeleighs were anxious about him. He looked haggard and gloomy; irritable as much as the instinct of good manners suffered to be apparent; restless under his grief, and yet reluctant to be out of touch with the associations that revived it. I was present when he knelt beside Eleanor's sofa for her farewell words.

"I will not go unless you send me," he said. "If there is anything we have left undone, anything I can still do, tell me and I will stay."

But the other mother was looking on, and Eleanor said "Go" amidst her tears. He remained a night at the Rectory, and I was witness to one other little scene at which Lady Sudeleigh did not assist. I was sitting in the dusk over the fire, and he and Janie were withdrawn into the window recess, the two young heads near together in the dim light; he had a paper he was unfolding to show her. "Here it is; this is the list of the

ports at which we shall touch, and the dates for letters; you will not let me look in vain for them, I know. Janie, you have been as good as an angel to me in my trouble; it will be heavier on me than ever when I cannot bring it for you to share. Promise to write to me, to write by every mail, and tell me any least thing. The faintest hope or trace will bring me back."

"I will write,—I will indeed." Her reply was so faint it hardly reached my ear, but he caught her hand and wrung it. I thought for a moment he intended a warmer caress. "God bless you," he said huskily, "my dear little sister."

I wondered as I listened whether it would always be a sister's love he would ask from her; and then, with the old haunting suggestion which my better reason refused, but which I could not wholly quell,—whether if another affection were demanded she would be guiltless in according it,—whether the hand that lay in his were indeed free from stain!

He left early the next day; and as it happened Lady Sudeleigh and I were alone over our tea that afternoon, and the hour, or the function, or the fact that she had that morning parted with her youngest and favourite child for an indefinite absence, may have predisposed her to confidence. Eleanor was sleeping off her agitation, and the effect of a suffering night; Gregory had been called to his sick parishioner, and had sent Janie abroad on another errand.

"I am more relieved than I can say that Richard is gone! You won't misunderstand me, Miss Varney, for I feel I can speak freely to you; but it is a great weight off my mind."

I said something sympathetic about his altered looks, and the benefit of change.

"Yes, the change will be every-



thing ; and youth, you know, youth forgets so soon. And in such a case as this it is much to be desired. I am afraid my dear friends here would feel it, but nothing would please me better than for him to find some nice girl,—desirable from every point of view, of course—who would console him for all he has gone through.”

The scene of the day before involuntarily rose before me, and the two young heads outlined against the twilight ; but it was not of Janie Moorhouse that the mother was thinking.

“I was very fond of Barbara. Sir Richard and I were quite satisfied with our son’s choice, and pleased to receive her as a daughter. But, sorry as I am for the Alleynes, I cannot think of this affair quite as they do. Her father seems so confident she is dead,—Eleanor that she has been trapped away from them and is held in some kind of impossible durance ; and even if I could, I would not argue against their convictions. But, Miss Varney, surely you do not agree with them in either view ?”

“I do not know what to think. I am quite at a loss.”

“Mr. Alleyne is annoyed at the opinion the police have formed about it ; but only consider probability. Is it likely any one would have any motive for detaining her against her will ? That is what I feel so strongly,—the absence of conceivable motive in either case. No, you may depend upon it she went away voluntarily. It is quite true there may have been no settled intention beforehand to throw over my son, and inflict such a blow upon her parents ; but my conviction is she met some one that night,—possibly by connivance of one of the household, I cannot say—and was persuaded to take the fatal step of quitting her home.”

“We have felt that to be unlikely, knowing her ; for my part, on the testi-

mony of those who knew her well. Besides, there was no lover.”

The little woman of the world shook her head as she warmed her dainty feet on the fender. She found Ditchborough cold, and had muffled herself in a soft fleecy wrap which breathed the same odour of sandal-wood as all her other possessions. “My dear Miss Varney, there is always a lover when a girl is as attractive as Barbara. And has it not occurred to you that the cousin may be in the secret ? The two were brought up together, and would naturally be intimate. Do not you think Janet Moorhouse might throw some light on the mystery if she would ?”

Janie again, and from a different quarter this time ! I replied that I could not think so ; I had heard her questioned, and her distress and perplexity seemed to equal ours.

Lady Sudeleigh shook her head again, but did not press the point. “And as for Mr. Alleyne’s conviction she is dead, I see no evidence for it whatever. The very sending back of the clothes is to me a proof she is alive, and there had been no violence. There is an old saying ‘murder will out’ ; surely such a search as has been made would by now have discovered the body or traces of it. I feel confident she is alive. And what would be more terrible than all for my poor friends,—and for Richard—would be her return with the blemished reputation of such an escapade. It is dreadful to say it, but that is my chief fear.” I looked at her as she sat erect, cup in hand, slowly stirring in an added lump of sugar, a little Rhadamanthus of virtue ; the easiest chair never offered any temptation to her to lounge. “Eleanor tells me,” she went on presently, “that Mr. Alleyne’s belief is mainly founded on having seen an apparition. Of course we can allow a great deal for excited

feeling at such a time, but I had thought him a different man."

"That was very much my own view: it was a surprise to me to find Gregory so impressed; but there certainly was the apparition. I witnessed it myself, and so did one of the servants; but I should be glad to think it all hallucination. I am not used to put faith in such matters."

"Excited feeling in all three cases, no doubt; the result of the shock you had experienced, and the strained expectancy of those first days. I have always set my face against this depraved craze for dreaming dreams and seeing visions,—Psychical Research unearthing what should be relegated to a moral dustheap, as was the wiser practice of my youth. We know there are no such things as ghosts, so how is it possible to see them?"

I remembered Mr. Redworth and his theory of the thought-body; but I was not going to argue with the little dame, who glanced at me with an air of triumphant Sadduceeism, as if her fiat had routed into Nirvâna a whole army of phantoms. She was on my own side of the argument, but somehow it did not sound so convincing from her extreme point of view as when it floated unformulated in my own mind. As I turned to the tea-tray I could not help a glance down the room, empty now, but for ever associated with my memory of that deceptive simulacrum,—that shadow of Barbara in bridal white, which had moved away from our appeal. But I was spared the necessity of replying, as the hall-door opened and shut, and I heard another footstep and voice accompanying Gregory's. There was the pause of throwing off over-coats and suchlike winter trappings, and then my cousin entered ushering in Mr. Redworth.

"I have brought Redworth for a

cup of your tea, Susan; and he has consented to stay and dine with us. Redworth, you and Lady Sudeleigh are already acquainted."

"On my own introduction only," said the mellow voice with which I had become familiar. "I shall get you, Alleyne, to present me formally."

Lady Sudeleigh had brightened up at once with the appearance of the gentlemen—a survival of youth there also!—and shaken off all the severity with which she was contemplating Psychical Research. No indeed, she said, no presentation of Mr. Redworth was necessary; she had a most grateful recollection of all he had done for her, and was charmed to have the opportunity of again expressing her thanks.

So he drew into the circle at the fire; and some lively conversation followed in which I was chiefly a listener, and so had leisure for observation. I thought Mr. Redworth had altered in the fortnight or so since I had seen him; there was a shade of depression about him when silent, and the melancholy softness of his dark eyes was sadder and gentler than ever, perhaps in contrast with the black vivacity of Lady Sudeleigh's. She had plenty to say on all kinds of subjects, and he was readier to meet her on her own ground than we were, being more used to the world in which she had moved. He amused her, in short, and was evidently a welcome addition to our rather melancholy circle. I liked him also, and I am sure to Gregory it was a boon that he should contribute to the entertainment of the guest. There was however one person who, if I mistake not, would have preferred his absence, and that was Janie. She did not make her appearance till the announcement of dinner, and then her greeting of Mr. Redworth was silent and formal, and she only once addressed him in .1

course of the evening. I noticed too that she ate hardly anything, as if, ridiculous as it may seem, the discomfort of his neighbourhood deprived her of appetite. I caught him once or twice regarding her curiously, and with something of the look I had once before surprised from him. It surely could not have hurt his vanity that out of his small audience of four, one listener should be unsympathetic; the rest of us were readily interested or amused, and the conversational shuttlecock was tossed gaily to and fro between him and Lady Sudeleigh. He was not, it seemed, content to be only alchemist and mystic; to-night it was the frequenter of London clubs and drawing-rooms, the cynical observer and wit who was posing before us; but always in the rare silences the shadow settled back upon his face.

Lady Sudeleigh, as I said, was well amused; and it was not till after the gentlemen joined us in the drawing-room that she remembered to challenge him about the arm. She did so with a graceful affectation of horror, and tapped his sleeve with her fan assuring him that he was "quite uncanny."

"It is unchanged at present: the journey did not disturb the process; but whether I have succeeded time alone will show. There lies the test. I may flatter myself for weeks, months perhaps, that I have triumphed over the Destroyer; but in my results hitherto he has been victor and not I."

"But I thought you had made some successes," put in Gregory.

"Perfect successes with animals; and I doubt not I could succeed as entirely with humanity provided I could induce death in my own way. It is in the post-mortem application I am inexpert. If you have any pet animals that you wish to preserve, Lady Sudeleigh, let me have them

when the time comes and I will give them their quietus."

"I am not a lover of pets like some people; but, if I were, I should hesitate to send them to suffer strange things in their old age."

"They would not suffer. I am no vivisector, I assure you. I dislike pain myself, and would hesitate to inflict it on another,—physical pain, that is—even by way of reprisal." The last words he added thoughtfully, and with that odd trick of stroking the upper lip which somewhat disguised his expression. "My victims, as you may call them,—and I have a whole Bluebeard's closet of them in fur and feathers—have not suffered a single pang. I overcome alarm with an anæsthetic, and use the injecting-needle as with morphia; in some cases administering an internal dose in addition. They never recover consciousness, but sleep themselves away in about twelve hours. I have never witnessed suffering. I wish you would come and see them, and the arm. My human specimens are not numerous, being difficult to come by. I had a terrible disappointment when I was in France; did I ever tell you, Alleyne? I obtained a head from the guillotine; the head of a young man who had been convicted of something quite abnormal in the way of crime, and who showed a revolting cowardice at the last, so I was told; I was not an eye-witness. Well, I had the head within an hour or less, and to all appearance the injection was absolutely successful. You should have seen that face,—the beatified expression on it after I had operated; no saint or martyr could have excelled it; it lacked only the aureole. It remained beatified for seventeen weeks, and then my failure was apparent. Limbs have remained unchanged for longer periods. All this is very horrid, is it not, Miss Moorhouse?" I do

not know why he addressed Janie, for she was not looking at him even, but had her eyes resolutely bent on her work. She did not reply; perhaps he did not expect an answer, for he hardly paused for one, and said, turning to Gregory: "Even if Lady Sudeleigh does not care to see my specimens [she had protested in dumb show when it was proposed], I have many things at Coldhope which would be of interest to her and to Miss Varney, and the house itself is considered worth a visit. Do me a favour, Alleyne. Lunch with me to-morrow at any hour you like to name, and persuade the ladies to accompany you. I would include Miss Moorhouse, but perhaps you would not all care to leave Mrs. Alleyne?"

He was looking directly at her, with again that peculiarity of regard. This time she raised her head and met it full. "Thank you," she said, "you are right: I will not leave Mrs. Alleyne."

No one took any notice of this brief passage. Lady Sudeleigh would be enchanted, she said, to see Coldhope, if Mr. Redworth would promise,—really promise—not to introduce her to any of his horrors; and as for myself, I was willing enough to accompany her, provided the proposal pleased Gregory. It had been impossible hitherto to persuade him to go anywhere since our loss; but doubtless he did not wish to refuse so near a friend and neighbour, and he consented easily, rather to my surprise. Mr. Redworth professed himself highly honoured, and bowing low to Lady Sudeleigh pledged his word that all his horrors should be under lock and key.

"And this great invention," she went on, "when are you going to startle the world with it? When will it be ripe for disclosure?"

"I cannot call it an invention; it is the revival of an old method, and

has been practised, by injection of the carotid artery, in modern times, but not with the results I hope to attain. You ask when it will be ready for disclosure,"—he looked down meditatively as if considering; "possibly in about forty years."

She gave a laughing exclamation. "I need not excite myself about it then. At sixty-five I take little interest in what is in store for the world forty years ahead. The others may perhaps hope to see you set the Thames on fire, but not I."

He smiled, drawing up his fine head and squaring his chest. "Then the expectation is stranger still in my case, as I am your senior. I have counted the threescore years and ten that is supposed to be the allotted span of life."

She looked up at him with genuine astonishment, no counterfeit of it in compliment; and it was true he looked as young as many men of fifty. "I was joking the other day about the fountain of youth, but you must have found it in good earnest. My dear Mr. Redworth, you are more wonderful than ever!"

His smile deepened and then faded, and the shadow succeeded it as he answered, "Not that; I profess nothing of the kind. Had I made such a discovery I should hardly withhold it from my friends. But there are certain ascetic rules given by the old mystics, certain methods of revitalisation, which do tend to prolong life. I feel myself a younger man than I did ten years ago, and my expectation of life indefinitely increased, apart from disease or accident. But I am beginning to wonder if the game is worth the candle after all."

From this the conversation turned to other matters; but later on, when Lady Sudeleigh was engaged in a lively argument with Gregory, and Janie had left the room, he came

sit by me, saying in a low voice : " Has there been any further appearance here that you could recognise ? " I replied in the negative, speaking in the same subdued key, and he went on : " I am interested, more deeply than you can know, and with greater faith than you accord, you, the eye-witness. I begin to think that after all is the crux,—the perception beyond ; that I have been mistaken in all my groping on this plane. To those who study as I do, there comes a point of advance where the two ways diverge. I have attained it, and I hesitate which to follow. That would decide me [he breathed the last words almost in a whisper] if I could know for certain the *via celestica*, the upward way, would lead me to her ! "

Next day dawned cold with keen March wind and crisp with March frost, but bright and fair. Eleanor was interested in our proposed visit and quite willing for us to leave her ; her prejudice against Mr. Redworth appeared to be dying out ; perhaps, indeed, she had only disliked him as a suitor for Barbara. She was sitting up on her sofa when we went in for a word of adieu, and seemed in more equable spirits than the day before ; possibly it was really a relief to her that the dreaded farewell to Dick was no longer in anticipation. Lady Sudeleigh whispered a word to her, and I gathered it was about my appearance. " Yes," returned Eleanor, " other people have noticed the likeness. There is a certain family resemblance, no doubt ; Gregory sees it more plainly than I do."

As we went away down stairs our guest said : " Forgive the personal remark, but I confess I was surprised by your likeness to poor Barbara. I thought you resembled her the first evening I came,—in figure and air perhaps more than face ; but just now

it was really remarkable. It may be the way you are dressed ; but it struck me irresistibly."

There was nothing particular about the dress ; a close-fitting jacket of winter cloth, and a hat and veil, such as might equally have been worn by my years or Barbara's without peculiarity on her side or an aping of youth on mine. No doubt the lace veil concealed my lack of complexion and may have helped the illusion ; but I only note the incident because of something which happened later.

The brougham had been ordered to take us up to Coldhope early, as we were to see the gardens and hot-houses before lunch ; Gregory following on foot after getting through his morning hours of literary work. The coachman proved unpunctual as usual ; and as Lady Sudeleigh was afraid of waiting indoors in her heavy furs, I suggested we should walk to the churchyard, as she had expressed a wish to see a certain tombstone, curious on account of its grotesque carving and epitaph, which had been spoken of the night before. We went in through the private wicket from the garden ; and while my companion inspected the tomb with interest through her long-handled eyeglass, my attention was caught by a disturbance in the road,—angry voices in altercation, then blows and a child's scream. The churchyard sloped upward, so by moving further along the path I saw what was happening,—a big boy belabouring a smaller one, who cried out dismally under the chastisement. I called to him to desist, but other intervention proved nearer at hand than mine. Janie was passing in the road, and I saw her seize the big hulking lad by the collar, and catch at the descending stick, at some risk to herself preventing a further blow.

" For shame, Phil Dempster ! To strike a boy who is a cripple, and not



half your size! Let him go at once."

It was surprise at the unexpected attack, and no instinct of obedience, which made the aggressor slacken his grasp, so that the victim,—a pale hunchbacked child who was one of our singers—was able to twist from under it and effect his escape. The big lad turned furiously upon Janie, and I hastened towards them afraid he was going to attack her; but the weapon employed was not physical.

"Yo leave me alone," he said; "yo've no call to go meddlin' for all yo be t' passon's niece. Folks say it's in prison yo'd be this minute ef the law had its way. Where's t' passon's daughter?"

She recoiled as if from an actual blow, and the rough fellow went swaggering down the road with his hands in his pockets. Lady Sudeleigh had followed in time to hear the last words; but the north-country dialect, which I have attempted feebly to indicate, was fortunately not intelligible. "What did the fellow say? He wants a good thrashing himself to teach him manners. I shall speak to your uncle, or to Mr. Redworth."

Janie was white as death; she gave me an imploring look, but seemed beyond speech for the moment. I put in a word to give her time to recover. "I don't think Mr. Redworth could interfere; you see, he is only the tenant. Does Mr. Alleyne know the boy, Janie? Is he a parishioner?"

"He lives in the parish," she managed to answer; "but he does not belong to uncle's church. His family are Roman Catholics; they are generally friendly and civil. I do not want the boy complained of for any rudeness to me."

The carriage came up behind us and made a diversion. As Lady Sudeleigh got in, Janie held me back for a moment. "Don't let anything be

said," she whispered; "I could not bear it." And the last thing I saw was her pale face looking entreatingly at me as we drove away.

## CHAPTER VIII.

LADY SUDELEIGH did not again allude to Dempster's insolence; the chief remaining impression seemed to be what I had said of Mr. Redworth. She had believed him the proprietor of Coldhope, and as we drove in at the lodge-gates and more slowly up the long rise of the park, I explained who were the real owners of the place, and why they had gone into exile.

"It is a sad thing, a sad thing," she said, "when the extravagances of a former generation pull down an old family from the position it ought to occupy. It must have been heart-breaking to go away and leave all this to strangers. I know how I should feel if we had to give up Leigh Hall, or if Maxwell could not afford to keep it up after us when we are gone. Thank heaven there is no fear of that; my only trouble is that he will not marry."

Maxwell was the Sudeleighs' heir, now abroad with his regiment; a brother so much Dick's senior as to have obtained his commission when the younger son had hardly emerged from his cradle. Lady Sudeleigh's grievance that she had no daughter-in-law was one frequently ventilated; and I think it was on this account that Dick's early marriage had been so warmly approved. She did not bemoan herself further on this occasion, as the carriage soon entered the inner gate and drew up at the door of Coldhope, which was hospitably set open, with Mr. Redworth bareheaded on the steps to receive us.

We employed the interval before luncheon in going over the gardens. They were not beautiful in their

winter aspect, but curious with close-cropped holly hedges and privet monsters, stone borders and sundials, and the basin of a fountain in front of the terrace centred by a melancholy-looking Triton blowing a conch. Mr. Redworth told us the house had originally been balanced with another wing, and that the terraced walk was built upon the ruins. It was destroyed by fire some sixty years since, and the Beryngtons had been too poor to rebuild it, possibly finding the reduced size of the mansion better suited to their means. "And it is of course far larger than I can use," he said; "but I needed the retirement and space for my experiments,—including the Bluebeard's closet I am not to show to Lady Sudeleigh. Coldhope has suited me well, and I have no present intention of leaving it."

The ornamental garden was not large; it only surrounded the raised terrace, and filled the centre of the original three-sided front. The other side of the existing wing looked on to the wilder park and woods. Mr. Redworth told us that the high windows facing this way were in the library which we should presently see from within; and the wing had, I noticed, a private entrance from the park; we passed it on our way to the walled gardens which lay behind the house under the shelter of the hill, with range upon range of glass forcing-houses. "I have nothing to do with this," he said, "except to purchase my supplies. The Beryngtons lease it to a man who farms the place for the market; and very well he does it, I understand, though I have sometimes to grumble at his charges."

It was pleasant to make the tour of that bit of the tropics planted down so oddly in chilly Ditchborough; warm-breathing, flower-scented places,

some of them filled with rare beauty delighting the eye, for flowers and ferns were cultivated as well as the early fruits. The March wind felt doubly bitter as we emerged at the end of our pilgrimage; and I think the danger of it struck Mr. Redworth, for he said hastily: "I must not keep you out in this keen air. Come back into the house the shortest way."

The shortest way was back to the postern that adjoined the library, and led through a small ante-chamber into the spacious room, warm with a glowing wood-fire burning on the open hearth. Lady Sudeleigh gave a sigh of satisfaction as she sat rigidly upright in an easy chair, and undid her furs from her throat, while we both looked round with interest. And indeed there was much to interest; pictures set on easels, portfolios of photographs and sketches, tables strewn with curios and antiques, precious manuscripts under glass cases. The walls round the room and on one side between the windows were lined with books, both in closed cases and open shelves, while a light inner gallery and staircase communicated with the floor above. Mr. Redworth explained that the majority of the books belonged to the house, and were of little interest to him, though doubtless valuable. "Mine are in these cases," he said, indicating those to right and left of the fire. "I have ousted the lawful denizens in their favour, and banished them to boxes up stairs. Probably the hair of the worthy Beryngtons would stand erect did they know what heterodox literature they were harbouring; though naturally that would follow as a matter of course when they accepted your humble servant as a tenant. This is where I sit chiefly, where I read and study; my laboratory is overhead; I will take you through it after luncheon, and you

shall see the suite of reception-rooms. I ordered fires there to-day in your honour, but I never use them, as you may suppose. This room and another for meals are all I need when here."

We were intent on a portfolio of sketches, the record of an Italian tour, when Gregory arrived; and directly afterwards the luncheon was announced by Mr. Redworth's Hindu servant, who wore his native turban, and was altogether a singular figure to meet with in an English country house. He waited upon us very deftly at table, and in complete silence; and I must say that all the appointments were as well ordered as if our friend had commanded an entire staff of butler and subordinates. One thing at least he must have possessed, and that was a genius for a cook. Whatever may have been the ascetic rules he was accustomed to practice, he did not enforce them on his guests, nor observe them himself on this occasion, except by abstaining from the wines which were offered us, and contenting himself with water.

Afterwards we made the tour of the house, and commented on the ugliness of the Beryngton family-portraits. I understand that the collection of pictures had once been a fine one; but pressure of circumstances had weeded out all those of value, and there remained, to my mind, nothing that would compare with the three or four modern landscapes in the library which were Mr. Redworth's property. There was some good oak carving, a mantel-piece by Gibbons in the dining-room; and hanging in the centre of the faded drawing-room, which breathed an unmistakable air of disuse, was a very handsome Venetian chandelier. When we returned to the library our host asked if we would care to go up to the

laboratory while Nursoo got coffee ready; so we ascended the inner stair, Lady Sudeleigh protesting all the way that she felt sure the Bluebeard's closet was in store for her after all.

The laboratory was a long bare room lighted with several windows which closed with barred shutters. It contained an electric battery, a lathe, a forge, a number of retorts and queerly shaped vessels, bottles on shelves against the wall, and two or three oak presses; while at one end a lamp was burning although broad daylight. A chair or two and some uncovered tables, one of them topped with gray marble, completed the furniture. Mr. Redworth picked up one or two of the appliances and gave us a little lecture on their use; then he took from a shelf a piece of carving on which he was engaged.

"I amuse myself," he said, "in this way, or with painting, in the intervals of my work. I am a handicraftsman for recreation, an experimenter for labour." We admired, as was natural, and the free design in bold relief was really well executed; but he disclaimed any praise. "This is only a rough affair; I have succeeded better in a different style, as you will see if you come into the studio." He opened a door at the further end of the room, and showed us into another smaller apartment which was richly carpeted with Indian work and had windows to the east and north. A painter's easel was set up in the north window, and a number of canvases stood in the corner beyond it, turned against the wall. The window to the east was occupied by a kind of shrine, which blocked out all the lower light, and was elaborately carved in dark wood looking more like ebony than oak. The large lower panel, which we had been brought to see, filled the whole width of the window recess and

was fully a yard high, a complicated figure-subject with foliated border. Above this rose the altar, and set in the centre upon it was a very striking and beautiful picture, the head of a dead Christ. I heard Mr. Redworth tell Gregory it was a copy only of an old master, but an especially fine one. The frame was of wrought metal surmounted by a representation of the crown of thorns; and above it stood a large crucifix in bronze, the arms of the cross in relief against the upper part of the unscreened window and gray sky. Two large candelabra were placed on either side; and below the picture in a chafing-dish burned a peculiar kind of aromatic incense, which rose before it in thin spirals of bluish smoke.

"This is my oratory," Mr. Redworth had said as we entered; and in front of the altar there was indeed the kind of chair which is called a *prie-dieu*, the only one in the room. I confess to have been so surprised by the whole thing that I had not a word to say, while the others were examining the elaborate carving, and Gregory was so much attracted by the picture that he went back to look at it again and again. It was truly fine, the head noble, the expression ideal; but for my own part, I have no great fancy for pictures of death. Seeing that I stood silent, Mr. Redworth turned to me and asked my opinion. I had to rouse myself to answer him. "It is very beautiful,—and very unexpected. I admire it all, both the carving and the picture; but somehow I feel oppressed by it. I don't know why,—and hardly what I am saying."

"You are looking pale, and perhaps it is the vapour. Many people are affected by strong scents. We will go back to the library."

Before leaving the room he took a small canvas from the pile against the wall and carried it with him, not

showing us what he held till we had descended to the lower room. Then he spoke to Gregory. "I have heard you say Mrs. Alleyne lamented having no portrait of your daughter Barbara. This is only a sketch, an impression; but if you think she would care for it, pray take it. I believe there is a certain likeness."

He set up the canvas in the light. It was, as he said, a sketch only, not a finished painting; but for pictorial effect it would have struck even a casual observer as clever and remarkable. And there was a likeness, it is true, but it was at once Barbara and not Barbara,—Barbara as I had never seen her; the familiar features faithfully delineated, but the expression curiously exalted, ecstatic, unnatural, idealised into a higher type of beauty at the sacrifice of her peculiar charm. This was not the girl who had been wayward and imperious at home, self-centred, as is so often the way with marked personalities, but at the same time the light and cheer of that home and the delight of our eyes. I could not say all this, or that a simpler presentation of her would have pleased me more. The beautiful head was relieved against a suggestion of rose-flushed sky,—sunrise or sunset—and these tints were repeated in a diadem of opals which crowned the waves of her dark hair. A white gauze scarf, or veil, was twisted round the head and indicated as draping the outline of shoulder and bust. The face and the gems were highly finished, but all else was vague.

"Eleanor will be very grateful to you for this," said Gregory, and he seemed much affected. "It is true we have no picture of our child; photographs never expressed her, and had not been attempted latterly. I always meant to have her portrait painted, but postponed it as one does such undertakings. Still I feel we

ought not to rob you—" He stopped, finding it difficult to express a suggestion that the picture might have a special value to the giver.

"If you like to take it I am well repaid," Mr. Redworth answered. "I have other studies, or I confess to you I should have been too selfish to part with it. I will have it placed in the carriage."

And laying it aside he began to talk to Lady Sudeleigh about portrait-painting, a subject on which she was fluent; while Gregory lifted the little canvas and took it over to the window for fuller examination. I sat still, endeavouring to combat an odd sensation of giddiness which came over me first in the oratory, induced doubtless by the burning scent, and affecting to occupy myself by examining the objects on a low table at my elbow. One of them did excite my curiosity; it was a large irregular-shaped crystal with polished surface, convex though not spherical, fastened by means of a silver rim upright on a stand of black wood. I was looking at this thing and trying to divine its use, when, in a way I can neither describe nor comprehend, the giddy swimming in my head seemed to be transferred to the interior of the crystal, and I saw it full of cloud and movement like the thin eddies of blue smoke and heated air which had risen up between me and the picture of the dead Christ. I do not think I could have looked away if I had tried; I was fascinated,—my eyes riveted,—I could not move. How long this stage lasted I cannot say; one cannot time the duration of such experiences by the seconds of the clock. I only know that as I gazed the whirling cloud became whiter and denser; and then all at once it parted and I saw — The face was Barbara's; but not a duplicate of Mr. Redworth's travesty of her so lately shown to us,—a mere

impression on the retina which was thus externalised. It was Barbara's living face as I had seen it in her home, vivid and mundane, with an expression quite other than the rapt serenity of her portrait. The lips moved; she seemed to be eagerly speaking, while the eyes looked full at me, anxious, excited, appealing. For how many heart-beats was it before the giddy whirling in the crystal eddied round it,—in front of it,—covering it? I gave a cry or gasp, something that attracted attention; and without losing consciousness,—that I never have done in my life—I felt as I imagine people must do who are on the verge of a fainting-fit. But I was conscious all the time; I knew Mr. Redworth came across to me with quick steps, and was aware that his first act was to move the crystal away. "You are faint," he said. "I was afraid of it upstairs. The incense affected you; will you lie down?" No, I said; I should be all right directly; it was nothing; but might I have a glass of water? The Indian servant came in at the moment with a tray of coffee, and our host despatched him for sundry restoratives. Wine was brought me as well as water, but I would only take the latter, and presently some coffee. And indeed the uncomfortable sensations passed quickly, leaving me without the previous giddiness, though my head and eyes ached for an hour or more, and I felt dull and inert.

Of course Gregory and Lady Sudeleigh were much concerned, but I did my best to reassure them; and the cause Mr. Redworth had assigned for my indisposition was accepted without demur. Lady Sudeleigh said she knew what it was to be readily affected by powerful odours; she could not bear hyacinths in a room, and so on. The carriage came round shortly after, and our host put us into it, Gregory hav-



ing already set out on foot; but before our departure Mr. Redworth contrived the opportunity for a question breathed low at my ear. "I am not mistaken. I watched you. It was the crystal?"

"Yes."

"And you saw—her?" very eagerly.

I had but time to sign an assent, when interruption came between us, and he could ask no more.

Whether it was the chill of the March wind after our pilgrimage through Coldhope hothouses, or only a piece of the general contrariety of things I know not; but on the morning after Mr. Redworth's luncheon I woke with a severe cold. It was not bad enough to confine me to bed, or so I thought; but I felt ill and wretched as one does under such conditions; unfit to go out, or for anything but an easy chair by the fireside. It was the more unlucky, as this was Lady Sudeleigh's last day with us; her departure had been arranged for the Saturday morning. I did not see much of her through the forenoon as she was sitting with Eleanor; and about three o'clock Gregory came in to ask her if she would go over the church with him, as he wanted to explain to her the lines of the proposed restoration. It was a good deal later when they set out, for Mathilde had to be summoned, and Lady Sudeleigh's toilette was always an elaborate affair. They went alone; Janie was upstairs writing letters for Eleanor. I was glad of the quiet; my head ached too much for occupation with book or work, and I sat quite idly looking away through the window at the pale winter sky and thinking of many things; of my life at St. Cyprian's, the coming of that illness which closed its usefulness, and of older scenes still, with which this narrative has nothing to do.

Lady Sudeleigh was away longer than I expected; the light began to fade in the room and my corner to become shadowy, though the afternoon had not yet merged in twilight out of doors. At last I heard a footstep,—an impetuous entrance—first into the hall, and then to the room where I was. I hardly knew it for Lady Sudeleigh's; she had a stately way of moving which did not lend itself to the idea of haste; but Lady Sudeleigh it was, looking at me from the door in blank astonishment. "Miss Varney, was it you in the road? I saw you but this moment outside; I followed you in!"

"Certainly it was not I. I have not moved from this chair since you left me."

I suppose my appearance carried conviction as well as my words; she glanced back into the hall and then shut the door, coming to a seat beside me and putting her hand on mine. "Miss Varney," she said, "I was right. Barbara is alive and here. What the explanation is I cannot say, but I have seen her and I know."

## CHAPTER IX.

"I WALKED to the church with Mr. Alleyne," went on Lady Sudeleigh; "you know all that. We looked over it, both outside and in, and I saw the arch that is blocked up. Then he said he had an errand in the village, and I proposed to accompany him part of the way and return alone. I like exercise and am accustomed to take it, and I was enjoying the crisp air. I went down the road with him, some distance, and then turned back; and when I came in sight of the churchyard I saw a figure moving about among the graves. I did not notice it particularly; but presently it came out at the gate into the road in front of me, and then I saw it was

either you or Barbara. You know what I noticed yesterday morning, that sometimes you have a look of her?"

"Yes."

"Well, it was natural to think of you the first moment rather than of her; and she was dressed very much as you were yesterday, in a close-fitting jacket and serge skirt. She did not look towards me in shutting the gate, but turned and walked on in front, quite naturally, not as if she were hurrying for any reason or afraid of being seen. I called your name,—Miss Varney!—but she walked on and took no notice; and as I followed I could see that the hat was different from any I had seen you wear?"

"What was it like?"

"It was a black sailor-hat with a blue and white ribbon; Barbara used to wear it at Filey last year; I have seen it dozens of times. Of course you may have one like it; they are quite common, and I could not tell."

"Did not you see the face?"

"No. And I did not notice the hair at the time; but I could declare it was her curly crop, not in plaits like yours. She turned in at the Rectory gate which was set open, and I lost sight of her round the turn of the drive going straight to the house."

"Were you far behind?"

"No, for I was hurrying after her; but the instant she was out of sight I began to think it must have been you. But I see it could not have been; I am satisfied of that."

"No," I said again, "it was not I."

"I am thankful Richard has sailed! It was my first thought. I don't believe she is in the house, or surely there would have been some disturbance; there is not a sound in Eleanor's room overhead. What can it all mean,—why is she hanging about here,—and what is to be done?"

"We must tell Gregory. But do

you know, Lady Sudeleigh, I am afraid it may prove to be,—the same kind of appearance we witnessed in the drawing-room."

"My dear Miss Varney, do you really mean to suggest that what I have just seen was a ghost?"

"I do not call it by that name. I don't know what it was; but I think whatever we saw then, you have seen now."

"I cannot think it possible that I, with all my wits about me,—not excited or alarmed or expectant as you were—saw anything at all but what was there in sober fact. You may take my word for it that it was Barbara in the flesh, every bit as living and substantial as you are before me at this moment."

"Then if it was Barbara in the flesh she must be sought for and brought home. We must not keep this to ourselves a moment longer." I drew my shawl about me and rang the bell, only to encounter a fresh difficulty. Mary answered it, the servant who witnessed the former apparition and had been so greatly terrified. To say anything to her would be most unwise; she would lose control of herself and alarm Eleanor. Asking if Mr. Alleyne had come in, I was answered, as I expected, in the negative, so I sent a message summoning Evans to come to us.

Evans came shortly and stood within the door with her usual dull composure; but as I proceeded to tell her Lady Sudeleigh had seen a person in the road, and turning in at the drive, whom she took for Miss Alleyne, and that I thought it desirable there should be a search, without alarming the rest of the household if this could be avoided, the unprepossessing elderly face began to work with strong emotion, and the hands which fingered her apron to tremble. "Yes, ma'am, I'll look; but we sha'n't find anything."

It's our young lady sure enough, and she can't rest in her grave because we don't know. She came before and she's come again; and she will come and come, God rest her, till it's all made clear!"

"But, my good woman, it was no ghost I saw," put in Lady Sudeleigh with some impatience. "It may not have been Miss Alleyne: it may only have been some one like her; but whoever it was I can be sure of one thing,—it was as real as I am myself. There will be no end to it if you all pick up this infection about seeing ghosts. Indigestion and imagination; that is what it all comes to!"

"I have never seen a ghost in my life, my lady, and don't look to; but it doesn't hinder them being there. No, I've never seen anything; but when I'm awake at nights I can hear my young lady's footsteps wandering up and down. I ought to know them after all these years,—me as was the first to set her on her feet to run alone. And it's wander they will till we are at rest about her, and them as are guilty have got their deserts."

Lady Sudeleigh shrugged her shoulders with an incredulous smile, but Evans's conviction was proof against both the argument and the ridicule.

"Go," I said, "and look in the yard and garden; and ask if any one was seen there about the time Lady Sudeleigh returned." She was departing, unconvinced but obedient, when the door opened and Gregory came in. To him also I had to detail the story; and he went out instantly to search the garden, telling Evans to go over the house. He came back to us before long, looking grave and sad, and shook his head in answer to my inquiry. Nobody was there: no one had seen anything; and this last mystery remained as destitute of explanation as the other. What he thought of it was plain, though he said little, and

Lady Sudeleigh did not vex him with sceptical argument; indeed it struck me she had become a shade uncomfortable herself, and was glad for personal reasons that the subject should be avoided. Gregory thought it better not to tell Eleanor anything, so we observed complete silence, and I doubt if even Janie knew.

Lady Sudeleigh left us next morning, and I was in bed when she departed; my cold, instead of mending, had become heavier and more disabling, and I was perforce obliged to keep my room for a couple of feverish days and nights. Now was the time for imagination to run riot, and in the lonely hours and long vigils before the dawn to play me tricks at will; but although memory was busy with what had been, Barbara came not; and my strained ears were dull to the footsteps which Evans could hear.

When I was able to be up again I learned that Mr. Redworth had called twice to see me, and had expressed concern on hearing I was confined to my room. I thought Janie had grown to look very ill in the two days; she was white and heavy-eyed, but she would not admit that anything ailed her. Eleanor, on the contrary, seemed to have drawn from Lady Sudeleigh's society a revival of energy; and when I went in to see her after Dr. Carpenter's visit, she was sitting up with a new look on her face. "I have decided, Susan," she said to me. "The specialist is to come over, and if an operation is advised I will submit. If they can render it possible for me to live a little longer, I must make the effort for Gregory's sake. You never thought he did the best for himself in marrying me; no, I don't blame you; but we have been a great deal to each other for all that, and he would miss me if I left him alone. After Barbara went, it seemed as if all was over for me; but I was wrong to think it,

wrong not to remember what I had left; I have told him and he is glad. It is a comfort to me that you will be with him; and you will help me to have courage."

So it came about that the next few weeks brought a crisis of anxiety to the gray Rectory. A white-capped nurse came to assist Evans, and there were certain hours during which the life of the wife and mistress hung upon a thread; and days to follow when we dared only to hope with trembling. But I am going on too far. I must return to the earlier part of March, after Lady Sudeleigh's departure and before the specialist came down; for I want to speak of Janie. She was always silent and uncomplaining, but she had become manifestly ill; her eyes grew to have dark circles round them, and I could see she made little more than a pretence of eating at our meals. Gregory said to me more than once that he thought she was ailing; she had become less active in the parish, and he missed his little curate.

The first time I went out after my cold she accompanied me, and as she was the bearer of a basket of little delicacies for an invalid and a message to one of the cottages, we walked in that direction. There was little nucleus of village: the houses were mostly scattered; but this particular one stood in a row of three or four, with the general shop at the corner, and the inevitable alehouse over the way. At the door Janie delivered her message, which was received in sulky silence, the woman seeming at first as if she would hardly take the basket from her hand. I was struck by the strangeness of her manner; but on asking a question myself about the sick mother, the woman's face relaxed at once into a smile, and she asked me civilly enough if I would step within. I did so, taking it for granted Janie was following me; but

finding myself alone, I said only a brief word or two to the sick woman, and then as soon as possible rejoined her outside.

"Why did you not come in?" I said to her. "Mrs. Pearson is not nearly so surly as she looks."

"The people don't like me in their houses," she answered in a low voice; "and as I know that,—it has been made very plain to me of late—I cannot intrude."

We were walking on down the road, when out of an open door just in front of us ran a flaxen-headed toddling child, only to fall face downward on the path, and set up a piteous wail. Janie was readier than I, and had picked it up and was consoling it, holding it to her and soothing the frightened sobs, when the mother appeared on the scene, tore it out of her arms without a word, as if indeed she had injured instead of succouring it, and retreated again within the house. I shall not soon forget Janie's face as she looked dumbly at me, and I looked back at her with growing understanding and dismay. We turned away from the village as if by a common impulse, and took the path leading to the moor. Neither of us spoke as we breasted the steepness of the hill; but when at the top, and we had paused for breath and to look out over that rolling expanse of purple and brown, now beginning to quicken with the new spring and just then dappled with sun and shadow as the clouds floated over before the light breeze, Janie turned to me at last. "Cousin Susan," she said, "you see how things are. You warned me; but I did not dream it could be like this with the people I came amongst almost as a child. They all think of me as that boy did not scruple to speak. Whether it is that I have murdered Barbara, or betrayed her, or hidden her, I know not; but they

consider me guilty in some way, and I cannot bear it any longer. I can be of no more use among them or to uncle. I must go away."

"Let Gregory speak to the people. He has no idea of this. He will be distressed and indignant beyond measure that you should be treated in this way."

"No, a thousand times no. I could not bear it. There must be no discussion. And what have I to complain of,—an averted face,—a changed manner? No; it is the thought in their hearts. Nothing will alter that till Barbara comes back to clear me."

"You must be brave, Janie. Live it down. If you let it hunt you away, will it not seem like something you dare not face?"

"I have faced it for weeks. At first I could not believe it, but it grew; the suspicious looks, the changed faces,—and now even the children!"

"But it must have grown from some beginning. Let Gregory sift the rumour, and find out who set it on foot,—whether the servants have said anything, or Evans, though she was cautioned."

"You mean about the dress? No, I don't think it is Evans. She condemns me as they all do; but she is very loyal to the family credit, and I in a way am of the family."

"Then have you an idea who it is? You are as unlikely to have an enemy as poor Barbara was."

"You asked me before whom I suspected. You will think me insane if I tell you; and it seems wicked besides, when I have no proof." Her eyes wandered from mine to the woods below us, and I saw them change and darken.

"Janie! you cannot mean Mr. Redworth?"

She looked at me full, saying neither ay nor no, but her face was

an admission. It turned me cold from head to foot. My first impulse was an indignant disclaimer, and then I remembered the thought which had grown in my own mind, and how it seemed to have been communicated silently from his.

"These same people who are unfriendly to me now were unfriendly to him once; they may be still for all I know. They used to say he had the evil eye. I feel as if his dislike to me,—his knowledge of my mind, which when he chooses to read it I cannot hide—had been used to poison something about me, some atmosphere, which, wherever I go, breeds the suspicion with which he would brand me, as his own safeguard."

"Janie, Janie, it is too terrible! Think what you are saying."

But she was roused now and would not be stayed. "It is terrible,—for me. Aunt Eleanor is changed; it would be a relief to her if I were gone. Even you have had misgivings; I have seen them in your face. The only two against whom he has been powerless as yet are Uncle Gregory and—Dick Sudeleigh."

"My dear, you are frightfully morbid; perhaps it is not wonderful when you have been so tried. Yet surely you would not be superstitious like these villagers; if wrong in your case, why should they be right in his? It is a fantastic dream. And even granted he had the power, why should Mr. Redworth attempt to injure you?"

"Because he knows I suspect him about Barbara as every one else suspects me."

The avowal had come at last, and was almost a relief to me. What had gone before had impressed me more than I was willing to acknowledge, but now I was able to be indignant and the reaction was complete. "That is an awful thought to have,"



I said severely. "Mr. Redworth is a good and honourable man, and your uncle's friend. He loved Barbara, and would never have harmed her."

"If I am wrong, it is only in saying what I cannot prove. I did not mean to tell you, but you drew it from me. Take it as unsaid if you will, but not in the sense that I retract it. He loved her,—yes; and love should be a safeguard, I admit it, if he were all you think. And once she loved him, but not for long. But I tell you this, Cousin Susan, she was afraid of him; afraid when he sent her the dagger,—afraid when she dared not sleep alone or walk out alone after we came back from Filey,—afraid when the marriage was hurried on so that she might get away and be safe. I say it only this once, to the winds and to you; he was her enemy and he is mine." The small childish face was fixed and stern. I said what I could, for my heart was hot within me; but I might as well have beaten at a rock. "Let us leave it," she said at last. "One of us must be wrong. If I have judged harshly, I have also suffered. Cousin Susan, you are a good woman, better than I by far, and so it is harder to you to credit evil. Goodness means strength, does it not? I want some one strong to help me, and I turn to you. Make Uncle Gregory understand what he must; spare him all you can, but help me to get away."

We were walking on now along the ridge to a further and more gradual descent than the steep path by which we had come. "Have you any plans?" I said.

"I thought of St. Cyprian's. You were not very happy when you went there. Did you find the work engross you so that there was less room for haunting thoughts? That is what I want. My life is too empty here, and it is growing emptier."

"There is plenty to do, and to do it well one must put one's heart into it. But it is not easy, Janie; there is much that is trying, disappointing, arduous. You are very young, and far less strong than I was; and you see, I broke down."

"I am stronger than you think, and surely I could help with the children. They might trust me with the children, for I love them so. I have nursed them for the village women here, and sat up with them when they were sick. You were telling us about the crèche the other day, and that the sisters were in need of help. Will you write and ask them if they will take me as a probationer?"

Well, the end of it was I promised to make the inquiry provided Gregory approved; and as we walked I gave her certain details about the duties she would have to undertake and the conditions of her service. I reminded her it would be unpaid; in my case that presented no difficulty as I have an independent income,—small it is true, though sufficient for all moderate needs; but I did not know how she might be placed.

"I think I can manage," was her answer. "When Uncle and Aunt Alleyne adopted me, my father made over my mother's little fortune,—it was only a few hundreds—for my use. I have the interest of it, and as uncle has been very generous to me it has accumulated. I can contrive to live, and what I am craving for is not gain but work."

There was a light about her eyes as she talked as if she longed to be up and doing, and I felt I must make it my part to widen this chink of hope. I never could see that man's doom of labour was a curse: "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread" is more like a blessing in disguise. What is it Shakespeare says about sleep being the balm for hurt minds?

I would counsel a dose of hard work in its place. Toil, and the energy to meet it, and a measure of success to crown it; that would be my notion of Heaven. A material one, by the way, which might shock some finer fancies.

We were nearly home, when just as the bye-lane reached the high road, whom should we encounter but Mr. Redworth. I confess to an impulse of dismay; we had not met since my vision in the crystal, and I fully believed that when he sought me at the Rectory it was to ask for particulars. I had an idea the history might now be demanded, and I felt out of tune with him and the subject, and unwilling to enter upon it. Little as I credited Janie's strange fancies concerning him, they had not been wholly without effect on me, for the time. I wondered if the man was really a magician. He looked keenly at me as he approached, both at me and my companion, lifted his hat with a smile, and passed us by without a word. The smile was a sweet one, with a peculiar comprehension about it which gave my conscience a pang. I was at once relieved and disappointed, and there was a lurking feeling of irritation with Janie at the bottom of my mind. Our talk was silenced; but indeed a few more steps brought us to the Rectory gate,—the gate through which Lady Sudeleigh had followed the figure of Barbara not many days before. Janie said with a gasp as she opened it: "I believe that man knows every word I have spoken this afternoon, for all he was miles away and you and I were alone on the moor!"

I need only say further about Janie's plans that I took Gregory into confidence in the course of the day following. He was, as I anticipated, both indignant and distressed at the annoyance to which she had been sub-

jected, and unwilling to let her go. I pleaded her cause as well as I could; and in the end he gave a conditional sanction about St. Cyprian's. She was to try it for a time only, and there were to be no vows; but nothing was to be done or said at this juncture which could disturb Eleanor. Janie must wait till her aunt was convalescent; and then, if her mind was still unchanged, I could speak to him again.

Several days went by before I saw Mr. Redworth: he neither came to the Rectory nor met us in our walks; and I think Gregory missed his visits as he commented on their intermission. One afternoon,—I remember it as the day before the specialist came down—I had gone for an hour's practice at the church, thinking I might not have another opportunity for some time if our anxieties about Eleanor increased. I was at first wholly absorbed in trying some new music, the execution of which was difficult to my unpractised feet and fingers, and I had to repeat more than one passage before I could be satisfied with the rendering. I passed on to a symphony of Mozart's which was familiar and presented less mechanical difficulty, so that my heart could go out on the flood of delicate harmonies. I was full of enjoyment when the melody abruptly terminated in a groan from the instrument, and the keys became soundless under my touch. I turned to reprove the indolence of my coadjutor, a small boy, Tim Sykes by name (who was usually very willing to earn sixpence by acting as blower whenever I needed his assistance), and found his head bent down on the wooden lever, while he was snivelling and sobbing in a dismal fashion. Now I could hardly attribute this phenomenon to the effect of my music on the unsophisticated mind of youth, so I concluded Tim was suffering from some physical malady.

"What is the matter, my boy?" I said. "Are you not well to-day?"

The sobs went on and the voice, when it came at last, was choked with them. "I'm afeared; I can't stay here no longer; I'm afeared."

This was not in the least what I expected. "What are you afraid about?" I questioned, rather sharply, it must be owned, for I was vexed by the interruption.

The answer came amid more sobs, "I'm afeared of the woman," and left me as perplexed as before.

"Sit up and stop crying, and tell me plainly what it is, for I can't understand you. You want to earn your sixpence as you have done before?"

I spoke energetically, and the small boy did make an effort to pull himself together in obedience; but the matter was only fathomed after much questioning. Yes, he wanted to earn sixpence, and his mother was expecting it; evidently there would be a serious business if it were not forthcoming. He did not mind blowing, but he was "afeared of the woman," and sobs again followed the confession.

"Tell me at once, Tim, who the woman is and why she frightens you. Tell me the truth about it, and you shall have your sixpence and go home."

The witness thus bribed did his best. The woman was like a shadow, and came when I was playing. He saw her first by the altar-rails, and she was kneeling down; this was the time before, and then he didn't mind

it as she was so far off, and looked like a real person who might have come in. But this time she had come quite near, close behind me as I sat at the organ, and he seemed to have noticed that the appearance was in some way unnatural. "What was it like?" I kept asking him, and the answer came at last. It was gray; he couldn't say what it was dressed in, he couldn't see the face plainly; but it was like "Miss Barbara who went away."

"Do you see it now?" I said; and I confess to a thrill on my own part as I looked down the apparently empty church. Not now, the boy said; it only came as I was playing,—"*peeping like, and going back*"; and the last time it came so close he thought it was going to touch him, and then his courage gave way.

It was no use to keep him longer; that at least was clear. I produced the promised coin, and while his doleful countenance brightened at the sight, I told him he must have been dreaming. I was not angry with him, I said, but he had better not speak of such foolish fancies any more.

I gathered up my music with a sigh, and proceeded to let him and myself out at the small private door through the vestry of which I had the key. The boy took to his heels at once; but when I turned from securing the lock, I started almost as much as if I had seen the gray figure he described to me. Sitting on the flat slab of a square tomb, and smoking a cigar, was Mr. Redworth of Coldhope.

*(To be continued.)*

## LEGENDS OF OLD SAINT MALO.

It is a little compact, walled town, with narrow streets and small shop-windows ; a flood of sunshine over it, but a constant shade lying between its tall crowded houses ; around it, broad modern suburbs and gay watering-places, but within its embracing walls all that is left to us of the past. And that is at once the beauty and the disappointment of St. Malo, according to one's point of view.

She is not, and cannot be, appreciated on first sight, or at first acquaintance, even by those who have eyes to read the writing on her walls, or ears to hear the voices with which her ancient stones call out. One must grow familiar with her ways, with her wonderful nooks and crannies, with her underlying life still full of old-world customs, with all the wrinkled face of her that time has left to us ; it is only with some knowledge and understanding that one can wholly perceive her beauty. And to those others, who came in from the gay broad beaches where brand-new villas rise yearly, what is to be seen in these dark streets and winding lanes that to unfamiliar eyes is worth seeing at all ?

Yet the longer one lives near her, the oftener one comes and goes within her walls, the fairer she grows and the more desirable ; till presently the veil drops from her face, and she shows us what she is, and what she has been in that past wherein she played so great a part. And surely, even to the indifferent, one may try to express something of her charm, as she sits compactly within her sunlit walls in the midst of the wide purple waters ; one may try to repeat some of

the stories which she herself is so ready to tell us ; one may try to make her a little more intimately known to those who come and go about her, through some of the old legends which the guide-books have not time to remember, or leisure to set down. For St. Malo is not to be measured by the height of her church-spire or the circumference of her walls ; nor even by the names of the great men who have been born or died within her boundaries ; but rather by the voices that reach us from her past, the voices of the stones of her which cry out to us, the voices of history, of legend, of superstition. One may well go to the guide-books for Dinard, for Paramé, for the new bathing-places along the broad yellow beaches of Brittany ; for St. Malo there is but one book that has anything to tell of her, but one book that is full of her legends, her customs, and her life.<sup>1</sup> And partly from that book, and partly from local tradition, and partly, also, from much coming and going within her walls, it has seemed possible to gather a few of the stories with which her ancient streets are loud, hoping that thereby she may make new friends.

The House of Silver, for instance, on which most passers bestow indeed an indifferent commendation, for it is good to look upon, yet it has a story to tell ; one that lingers about it, and lends life to its gray stone face,—life, and also a memory of death.

In the Place Broussais, once the Place du Pilon, southward of the great door of the church, the House

<sup>1</sup> LA CÔTE D'ÉMERAUDE, by E. Herpin.

of Silver stands amid its neighbours, older than they and finer, with a stately front of carved stone, with rows of tall windows, and with a magnificent oaken door. But if it is fine still, in the days when Louis the Fifteenth was king in France it was a very palace in comparison with the surrounding crowd of ancient wooden houses, the highest of whose overhanging stories stood humbly about its knees. And the House of Silver was something more than this ; if it was the stateliest dwelling in the town, it was also the home of the fairest and unhappiest lady in all the Clos-Poulet ;<sup>1</sup> it was the home of Guillemette de la Marzelière.

Guillemette was the only daughter of a builder of ships, one of those who sent out the vessels which made St. Malo famous in all the ends of the earth. Of such men were the Malouins whom princes loved to honour ; of such men were the corsairs, and Jacques Cartier, and others who stayed more ignobly at home, and yet helped nevertheless to make their city famous. And Guillemette was the daughter of one of these, and the most beautiful maiden in the town. She was seventeen, and betrothed, some say, to her cousin Léon, who was in the guard of honour of the noble Duchesse Maclovie de Duras ; certainly they loved each other as the sequel shows.

For presently it happened that the noble Duchess came to St. Malo, and was welcomed to the town, according to custom, by maidens clad in white and bearing flowers ; and Guillemette was chosen, as fairest among the fair, to present the tributary silver spindle. For in Brittany, where there was no Salic law and lands and honours were free to pass in the female line, to liege lady and princess homage and welcome were paid in the offering of a

begarlanded spindle. Thus Guillemette was seen in her beauty by the Marquis de la Marzelière, a gentleman of the Duchess's suite, who straightway fell so heartily in love with her that he betook himself to her father and demanded her hand in marriage. Whereto Messire Belin, caring not at all for that uncertain betrothal with Léon, or for the tears and supplications of his daughter, gave prompt consent with many accompanying oaths.

That night there was a great ball to welcome the Duchess, given at the Hôtel Granville where she lodged. All St. Malo was there, and Guillemette left her tears at home and went thither also ; for there she knew that she would meet Léon. And presently it came about that from the midst of light and laughter, while a minuet was being danced by the Duchess and the finest gentleman of St. Malo, Guillemette and Léon fled silently out into the darkness, taking their way to the rampart whence with a rope-ladder they could descend to the beach of Bon-Secours, there to take boat, and so to Dinard and safety. But when Léon was down, and Guillemette just about to follow him, out of the darkness behind her came the angry arms of her father, Messire Belin, who had followed her in her flight and now held her prisoner, swearing by a thousand thunders of Brest that he would know how to make her obey him. And down below, on the beach so mockingly named of Bon-Secours, four men flung themselves upon Léon and carried him away, first across the water to Dinard, and then by rough and secret paths to a lonely manor near Plancoët.

Flung across a horse, gagged and bound, the long dark ride by field and through forest was bitter enough for Léon ; and not the less bitter that by this very way he had hoped to carry

<sup>1</sup> The local name for the Malouin district.



off his lady. But at St. Malo this black night was blacker still for poor Guillemette, who was told that Léon was drowned, and incontinently went near to die of sorrow. Yet she did not die: there are those, strong to suffer, to whom death comes lingeringly; and Guillemette was one of them. But, as one supposes, in the lassitude that lay upon her, the carelessness of life or self, the constant pressure on her feebleness of her father's angry will, she let herself drift into submission and was presently betrothed to the Marquis de la Marzelière; and presently also, in the same indifferent misery, she let her maidens dress her for her marriage at midnight in the old cathedral, with all the doors flung open as was due and customary. But there was one guest for whom there was neither invitation nor welcome. Léon had escaped from his guardians and came with all speed to St. Malo; finding no boat at Dinard he swam across, and making his way hardly into the town, he reached the open door of the cathedral a few short minutes after midnight. There he stood, in the glare of the torches, on the steps leading down into the church from the west door, the water running from him and his face white and drawn with fatigue. To the gay crowd who swarmed about the altar-rail he must have seemed a sorry wedding-guest; but to the eyes of Guillemette, the sea had certainly given up its dead; and it was too late!

Thereafter she smiled no more. Vainly her husband took her to Court, vainly he brought her back to St. Malo. Vainly he built for her, in the place of the ancient wooden house where she had been born, the finest palace that could be imagined: a tall stately house of granite graciously carven, as it is still to-day, save that then, according to tradition, it had a

roof of silver. But Guillemette smiled no more. She looked out of her high window with sad bewildered eyes,—eyes that were as blue as the sky, and as empty of all understanding; Guillemette who had become as a little child again; poor mad Guillemette, who pulled down one by one the silver tiles that were within her reach, and threw them, as one tosses crumbs to the waiting birds, to the children in the street below, crying to them constantly, “Little ones, little ones, go seek my love!”

And so Guillemette died. Yonder in the church,—it is no more a cathedral—under a cross-stone of marble, she lies at the foot of the lady-altar; in the church where she had been baptised, where she had made her first communion, where, on a certain midnight, she had been married, there she was buried, with, one doubts not, a suitable magnificence of mourning draperies and the pomp of her rank. And there one may find her still, if one seek carefully for the worn cross-stone: *Guillemette, Dame Marquise de la Marzelière*. And perhaps, or so one hopes, unnamed and unknown, Léon may lie not far away. But near by in the Place Broussais the House of Silver still looks down gravely out of its splendid windows, and its carven granite walls have changed not at all. Almost one can perceive the memories that lurk within them, and catch a glimpse at that upper window of a frail figure tossing down the silver tiles and calling constantly to the children below, “Little ones, little ones, go seek my love!”

Round the nearest corner, and a little way up a marvellous street of ancient houses, stands the Château des Bigorneaux, or House of Periwinkles, bending forward with its broad projecting stories as if peer-

ing curiously down the Rue Gouin de Beauchêne that opens in front of it. A very wonderful house even to look at; the most wonderful, perhaps, in all that wonderful alley. The wood-work is worn and stained and roughened into many colours, golden and tawny and black, panelled and cunningly wrought, with traces of the gay paint and gilding that has been washed away from it. The sun, travelling down the street of an evening low and bright, mellows its splendid tints to a sober magnificence, and touches the long ranks of tiny panes of glass which overlap each other in the strip of window running the whole width of each story. Of these there are five, each projecting further over the street, and lit by the dappled strip of glittering iridescent window; five overhanging stories, so that on the ground there is a dark continuous shadow about the archways heaped with motley things for sale; faded gaudy garments, fishermen's boots, and rusted ironwork, tawny or grass-green pots, round-bellied and thin-lipped, quaint two-handled earthen and copper pipkins,—all catching the late sunshine as it comes along the street of an evening, glittering in the gutter that runs down the middle of the cobble-stoned pavement. On either side of Number 28 (for it bears that number visibly and hideously above its ancient door), up and down, opposite, and along the Rue Gouin de Beauchêne, there are other houses, old and quaint and curious. It is not alone, and yet in a sense it is apart from the others, even though they lean up against it; it is alone in its age, for these in their decay are yet younger; it is alone, one thinks, in its beauty. And when the sun comes down the street of an evening, and the ancient house gathers the light to itself and glows therein golden and soft, one looks at it curiously, wondering what is the

story that it must certainly have to tell.

One knows dimly that it was once the home of some great Malouin family; one can imagine a day when, standing among its fellows, in this alley bordered with the high projecting houses that almost shut out the blue sky, it would have been a fit dwelling for any lord or lady. For certainly in those days life was simpler and less reticent. How could it be otherwise when the house fronts were built of hundreds and hundreds of tiny overlapping panes of glass, staring out into the street like lidless inquisitive eyes, set in frames of wood strangely carven and gilded, and sometimes overlaid with many-coloured tiles? How could it be otherwise when these frontages of glass drew constantly nearer together as they rose above the narrow alley? Such was, and is, the Château des Bigorneaux; and yet the story that it tells us to-day is neither of lord nor of lady, nor after all so very ancient.

In that uncertain time,—or, as they say here, in the pleasant yesterdays,—there lived in one of the rooms of the old house a poor woman whose trade was to sell periwinkles. And in that time, also, periwinkles were almost the only dainty of the Clos-Poulet. They alone, with the strangely shaped biscuits made immemorially in the country-side, were sold at the door of the cathedral as one came out from high mass: they alone, with those same biscuits, were sold at the fair held at the Grand' Porte, at that called the Sainte-Ouine on the grand Bey, at the Fair of Periwinkles on the Quai St. Louis,—fairs that were famous then for many leagues around; and they alone were the favourite dinner of the Malouins when Lent came back and men sang the canticle of the Passion from door to door.

But once on a time this old woman fell ill seeking for her periwinkles about the rocks of the Bey and Gros Malo : Gros Malo, where the bombs thrown by the English struck and so saved the citizens ; which has given its name to the great bell that hangs in the church spire, because of a saying among the people that the town will last just so long as Gros Malo is above water. And since the old woman had fallen ill, there were no periwinkles for her to sell, and no pence to be brought home, and her son must go hungry. Her son had been a *Terreneuvas*,<sup>1</sup> tall and strong, her pride and her dependence ; but one day, as happens so often amid the fogs and the rocks of those far waters, he had been shipwrecked. All who were with him had been lost ; and of him also the best was left behind in the gray confusion of the fogs ; for the sea sent home to his mother only the flesh and bone of him and kept back all that had made of him a man. The fear of death had turned his brain, and he came home even as a little helpless child. In her bed the old periwinkle-seller tossed and moaned feverishly, crying out in her delirium that next day was Christmas, and that she had no periwinkles to sell ; that when all the world came out from high mass she would not be there in her place, and that since there were no periwinkles there would certainly be nothing for her son to eat.

And it happened, with the strange happenings which we call chance, that her 'son heard her, and in a fashion understood. And he understood also that it was Christmas-time, and that now the Child-Jesus passed through the night air, His heart full of grace and His hands of gifts, on His way to

fill the shoes of the children upon earth whom He loved. The poor fellow understood this, because they had told him so when he, too, was a child ; and now he was once more one of those little ones to whom, on this night, the Child-Jesus came. And opening the window he knelt down, and looking up into the blue night sky he asked stammeringly, with his poor helpless lips, of the Child-Jesus, who was certainly passing by, for periwinkles, for as many as would fill his great shoes, which he had put side by side on the wide hearth. Then in the clear night air the bells began to ring, and a strange cloud gathered and came together, drifting in from the shore. From the Bey, from Gros Malo, from the *Ébiheus*, from *Cézembre*, came a cloud of periwinkles, that filled, and heaped up, and overflowed from his great shoes ; from *St. Jacut*, from *St. Cast*, from the *Cap Frehel*, from all the coast they came, till there was no room for more : till the floors were covered with them and the walls, till they lay thickly upon the roofs, and were piled high even in the great zinc gutters.

And next day, when all the world came out from high mass, the old woman and her son sold the periwinkles at the door. Every one wanted to buy, but there were more than enough for all ; and there was a Christmas dinner for mother and son, and perhaps a little new taper set humbly amidst the great candles of richer folk in the cathedral.

Since then the good people of the quarter call the stately house which stands on tiptoe, peering down the *Rue Gouin de Beauchêne*, the *Château des Bigorneaux*, the Castle of the Periwinkles ; and since then, every year on Christmas Eve the periwinkles come again from all the coast in a wonderful miraculous cloud, covering the floor and the walls, lying thick

<sup>1</sup> The men who go yearly to fish on the Newfoundland banks are locally called the *Terreneuvas*, as also are their vessels ; the Iceland fishers are called the *Islandais*.

upon the roof and piled high in the great zinc gutters, so that all who pass in the street who are pure of heart may see them for themselves ; but only, so they tell us carefully, the pure of heart.

Not very far from the cathedral, but reached by a maze of ancient streets and alleys, some not so wide as the span of one's arms, there is a tiny court. One may go to it by way of the house of Duguay-Trouin, where the great corsair lived ; where he consulted with his fellows whether they should lend thirty million francs to the King of France ; where he planned his raids upon the Spanish Main ; where perhaps his daughter (it was certainly the daughter of one of them) boxed the ears of a Prince of the Blood because he was not punctilious enough in his courtesy. There, too, when the dinner with its silver dishes and costly meats was over, the *fri-cassée de piastres* was brought in, and the red hot golden pieces were flung down with laughter to the waiting crowd below. And the old house blinks beneath its overhanging brows, heavy with age ; the others that once stood beside it are all gone, and even the ancient cross of the bishops has vanished, and there is only a niche filled with tawdry flowers and a plaster figure, the Virgin of the quarter, Our Lady of the Croix-du-Fief.

Or one may go by the chapel of St. Aaron, the tiny oratory which is only opened at the Whitsun festivals, and which, to-day so silent, has behind it so wonderful a past ; the little chapel which, to every Malouin, is doubly, trebly sacred ground. For here, more than a thousand years ago, St. Aaron lived and prayed, and taught Christianity to the people, dwelling holily on the summit of this rock, before, perhaps, the waters swept in over the great forest of Scissy. And here,

later, came to him St. Malo, the Welsh monk, who landed on the Island of the Harbour out yonder in the bay, the ancient port of Aleth, which is now St. Servan. Here, where one stands on the summit of the rock, in the midst of the old town of St. Malo, there was then no town, even no habitation at all. There was only a bare rude rock rising suddenly above the forest-lands, the marshes, and the wide treacherous sands ; and on the topmost peak of it an uncouth heap of huge stones, which was St. Aaron's sanctuary ; and even long after, the people of the great neighbouring town of Aleth had no name for it but St. Aaron's Rock. It was also the sanctuary of St. Malo, who became later the first Christian bishop of the Clos-Poulet, and who, when St. Aaron died, embalmed him with his own hands. And there is, it is said, within the encasing of the present walls, having outlived all its rebuildings and restorations, a great stone, dating from that first rude sanctuary where St. Aaron lived and taught Christianity to the people, and, when the fogs crept in from the sea, blew upon a shell to warn fishermen from shipwreck in the treacherous shallows about his rock ; whence, later, St. Malo was called to lay off the hermit's gown and to put on the robes of a bishop. Here, beneath the paved floor, lie the bones of St. Aaron, just as they were torn up secretly and in hot haste from their place in the cathedral, when the Sans Culottes were laying profane hands upon the Church and its treasures ; torn up to be brought here and reburied, by night and in silence, without state and without ceremony. So it was that the bones of St. Aaron came home at last to rest where, so long ago, he had lived and died. Here, rather than in cathedral or church, St. Aaron is at home.

Yet one arm of him has been guarded elsewhere, and is still one of the treasures of St. Malo. When, in those days, the ships of the English came in sight, the honourable Chapter of the cathedral walked in procession through the streets and round the ramparts, bearing the arm in its rich case of gold before them ; singing, as they went, a litany, which had for refrain and response a prayer for help against the English : " From the fury of the English, good Lord, deliver us ! " And then, in the tiny chapel of St. Aaron mass was said, and St. Malo took confidence and feared not at all the descent of the enemy. Therefore, says tradition, the town remained virgin and impregnable, being guarded by saints and angels ; and therefore the arm of St. Aaron is elsewhere to-day, and not at rest with himself in the chapel built upon the spot where once he lived and died. But here, within the tiny oratory with its quaint wooden figures of the two saints, the hermit and the bishop, its splendid golden vessels, its panelled walls—here, where the guide will not enter but waits kneeling and praying upon the threshold—here is the beginning and the birthplace of the city of St. Malo, the first of it that emerges from the dim past, the cradle of the Clos-Poulet, of the corsairs, of all that has built itself in the passing of time into history. It is very sacred ground, and it has been sacred already for more than a thousand years.

Whichever way one takes, with patience and many turnings, one arrives at last at the tiny court of which we have spoken ; the Cour La Houssaye, at the end of the Ruelle du Pélicot and the Rue Porcon de la Barbinais. And this court has also a story to tell.

Long ago when the houses of St. Malo were all of wood and glass like the Castle of the Periwinkles, or more

often still of rude timber frameworks covered with plaster and thatched with rush from the wide marshes, there was already one which was built fair and strong of Brittany granite. This one, the only one of its kind, had windows arched and moulded like those of the cathedral itself, and topped with curling vines and hanging clusters of grapes carved in relief. It had also a stately tower, with a coat of arms above its door that jutted out in front like a tall stone sentinel, keeping guard over the streets that climbed up to it, the Ruelle du Pélicot and the Rue Porcon de la Barbinais. And this fair and strong house in the little court was called then, as it is called still, the House of the Good Duchess Anne.

In the beginning of the year 1491 the Duchess dwelt there for a space ; and those who passed by saw her daily, spinning with her silver spindle as she sat at her arched window. They could watch her spinning, spinning, as she thought of the future, for herself and for her broad and fair lands of Brittany. She had just betrothed herself with Maximilian of Austria, the White King who would one day be an Emperor ; and she remembered sadly that thus her beautiful ermine must become German. And she remembered also that she had refused Charles of France, who was still a suitor for her hand, so sore in love was he with her wide duchy ; and perhaps already she asked herself whether after all it were not better, since God had given no prince to Brittany, that her beautiful ermine should become French rather than some day German.

And as she thought, and as she wondered, she let her silver spindle lie idle in her lap, while her hounds slept about her feet. And one night as she sat thus, thinking and wondering, a knight rode by. The tramp of his horse's feet sounded on



the rough pavement like the sweet ringing of the Angelus ; and in the moonlight his horse shone white against the night, white as the ermine that the good Duchess loved. And as he passed, in the old speech of her country he spoke to her: "Marry me, beautiful princess, and, neither German nor even French, thy white ermine shall be always the ermine of Brittany." But the Duchess did not answer, and the knight passed upon his way. Nevertheless the day after he came back, again, and always again, and always was his speech the same ; but never a word did the Duchess answer, and at the end of the year Brittany became French.

But those who live to-day in the Cour la Houssaye and in the streets about it, say that when the Angelus rings one can sometimes hear the tramp of a horse's feet near by the House of the Duchess Anne ; and when the white moon is high, there sometimes passes against the night the shape of a horse white as the ermine of ancient Brittany. And the grandams of St. Malo, the old women, rich and poor, who have heard the story when they were little children from those that went before them, still nod their old heads wisely when it happens that things go awry:—"All that perhaps would never have come to pass if the good Duchess had married the Knight of the White Horse, and if her white ermine had remained always the ermine of Brittany."

Four hundred years have gone since Brittany became France, and yet Brittany is Brittany still. The world has changed its face, yet St. Malo has withstood the hand of time, and the constant fretting of the sea, and the terrible north-west gales of winter ; she has withstood even the destructiveness of man. And she will

withstand all these, tradition tells us, so long as a single taper burns before Our Lady of the Grand' Porte, where to-day not one but many twinkle and flicker unceasingly about the niche set within the stonework midway between the huge squat towers on either hand. Outside is the gray stone wall, a rude and candid strength ; inside, the dark and narrow street running up to the flying buttresses of the choir, and high above, the white single spire set radiantly in the arch of sunshine and sky. And on the inner side of the gate in a wide vaulted niche fronted with glass, Our Lady of the Grand' Porte looks down, smiling, with tapers flickering amidst the flowers about her feet.

It is a busy little square beneath ; busy at all times, busiest of all on certain infrequent days during the long quiet of winter. Here in autumn, when the Terreneuvas and the Islandais return, who are under her especial protection, and go yearly in pilgrimage to her shrine at St. Jouan des Guerêts, here they meet to make their engagements for the next season's fishing ; brown-skinned and vague-eyed, with the long-sightedness of men who dwell much upon the sea. And the engagements they sign here, with perhaps a glass too many even for their strong heads, are signed also with the sea and the fogs and the long strong winds of the Banks. But through the tavern-windows they look up at Our Lady of the Grand' Porte, the Star of the Sea, the Patroness of St. Malo ; and they are content to remember that even yonder her protection is with them still.

The winter passes, and Christmas with it ; the midnight mass has gone by, with its loud uproarious bells pealing out across the water, and the coming and going of Christmas merry-makers. There are more tapers than can be counted shining about Our

Lady of the Grand' Porte, and a great wreath of evergreens is twisted about the stanchions that support the lamps below. But there are greater days for her to come.

Now it is Lent, and with it the Carnival. Outside on the Quai St. Louis, there are the swings and the booths and the lotteries; the quaint piled baskets of strangely-shaped biscuits, and the periwinkles in huge bowls; there are drums and trumpets, hideously vociferous, and a loud perpetual laughter that is not to be described in words. And inside the walls, where the crowd presses thickest, there are masks and dominoes, and figures grotesquely clad; there are false noses and painted faces; there are pierrots and clowns, devils and punchinellos, men in women's clothes and women in men's; there are pious folk, chaplet in hand, taking their way lingeringly to vespers, priests with breviaries tucked under their arms and tolerant wandering smiles, sisters in close black veils, or wide outstanding linen caps. There is life, life of all ages and of all conditions, about her feet, where Our Lady looks down from the Grand' Porte and smiles with understanding.

And a little later it is still another fair, or so it seems. Only outside the walls, along the Quai St. Louis, there are two great steamers which are rapidly filling with the last of the Terreneuvas, the men who will join the fishing-schooners at St. Pierre-et-Miquelon. There are perhaps three thousand of them, rarely less, who are leaving their villages desolate and their homes empty; who will be starting presently for the summer's fishings, to return thence in late autumn, or perhaps—who knows?—to return not at all. There are so many wrecks, so many boats that vanish into the fogs and are no more heard of; in all the length and breadth of the Clos-Poulet,

so many widows who wait eternally for news, so many orphans.

Now the shrill wail of the steam-whistles sobs across the town, calling up the laggards; it is time to go, and Our Lady of the Grand' Porte looks down pitifully on those that pass beneath. For they are her children, and she is their mistress and their guard; and as, in hurrying through, they glance up at her and cross themselves, it seems to them that in her smile there lies a terrible knowledge of that mysterious thing, the sea, whose secrets she shares, of that barrier through which some day they all must pass. And then they remember with a new confidence that she is herself the Star of the Sea, the Happy Gate of Heaven. Outside the whistles sound once more, and the steamers move off with a loud angry roar of escaping steam; there is a clatter of innumerable feet as the crowd rushes to the breakwater for the last farewell. But over all rises the sound of the Terreneuvas singing the canticle that is peculiarly their own, and as the *Ave, Maris Stella* peals out upon the air, Our Lady of the Grand' Porte looks down and smiles with understanding.

Later still, when the month of roses has come, there is the Fête-Dieu with its processions, when a great altar is set up before her and a wonderful carpet of flowers is laid over the little square below. An oriental mat of marvellous colouring is spread the length of the streets; strange ingenious devices and symbols are wrought in petals and flowers, massed and sprinkled in a bewildering sequence, stars and crowns in daisies and marigolds, hearts in poppies, crosses and anchors and sacred monograms in exquisite roses and white lilies; everywhere along the passage of the Host is spread an indescribable carpet of sweet scents on which alone the priest who bears it may walk. And

all the length of the streets there are white hangings and crossing garlands of leaves, and banners, and everywhere roses. And upon the kneeling crowd, and the red-clad choir-boys tossing their censers and flinging rose-petals into the air, till the little square is full of them, flickering and falling; upon the great golden canopy, and the priest with the monstrance held high in his covered hands, Our Lady of the Grand' Porte looks down, and still she smiles with understanding. Perhaps she remembers that presently in August they will come again to her; and she remembers too the many times that they have so come before. It is only the faces of the kneeling crowd that change; all else goes on the same for ever.

Only a legend all that, one says; a legend that still lives and is honoured in its observance. A beautiful legend nevertheless to those who come and go, and remembering these things look up curiously at the niche in the great gate, where lights burn always about the figure that is seen dimly behind its flowers.

These are but one or two of the

stories of the streets; but one or two of the legends that have come down to us through time. There are many others. There is the House of Glass, with its hanging gardens; there are the chapels, each with its history; there are the crosses within the town and without the walls; there is the strange and simple pathos of the departure of the Terreneuvas. There is the origin of the saying "Duc, cherche tes chiens!" and why, at St. Malo, one must cross one's self before bathing; there is the cat's gold and silver, and the stories of the wonderful city of the Saracens at Quid-Aleth.

And, above all, year by year and season by season, there is the ever-changing life, which yet changes so little, of the town, compact within its embracing walls, set in the midst of the free air and the large sky and the purple water. Outside are the country and the wide sunlit beaches, where Paris comes with its gaiety and its laughter and its perpetual need of amusement; within, dark streets and ancient houses, a crowded neighbourliness of life, a small contented labour, and so much of the past as Time has left to us.

## SOME RIDING RECOLLECTIONS.

WHEN we were boys our first lessons in riding were taken on (and off) the back of a donkey. He was a creature of changeable but, on the whole, amiable disposition. When his temper gave way before the trials to which we subjected it, we took many lessons in that gentle art of falling off which is so useful a supplement to the science of riding as more generally understood. We can make this avowal without any sense of shame now, for it happened once, on a day for ever memorable, that our donkey kicked off our riding-master himself in all his glory of boots and breeches. Joe, the coachman's boy, declared all our theory of donkey-riding to be incorrect; and it is significant that, though the donkey could kick off the riding-master, boots and breeches and all, it entirely failed to shake Joe from his seat by any of its antics. But then Joe's method was entirely different from that of the riding-master's; it was indeed so simple as scarcely to deserve the name of method, being contained in the single precept that you should sit as near the tail of the animal as possible. That was the sum total of his theory of donkey-riding, and it worked to perfection in practice. Our uncle, who was in the Navy, explained the mechanics of Joe's style of riding nautically: "It's as plain as a pike-staff," said he, "that when you've got all the weight in the stern, the craft isn't likely to go down by the head." It was at all events true as a statement of fact, however it may have been as an explanation of the principles, that the donkey did not "go down by the head" so frequently

when Joe was riding him as when we were mounted "amidships." And this going down by the head always had the same result; we went off over the head.

For a long while we were not allowed to ride with stirrups, and whether or no this was a wise provision is hard to say. It has its advantages and its disadvantages. But it is very certain that Authority was justified of its wisdom in making us ride often without bridle. The mouth of our donkey was as the nether millstone, and had we been allowed to drag on it at will our hands would inevitably have been ruined irretrievably. As it was, we learned to gallop along secure of our seat, so long as "the craft did not go down by the head," while we guided the donkey by means of a stick more or less ungently applied to one side or other of his head and neck. The first principle of good riding, we were taught, was that the seat was to be kept by the hips, knees, and balance only.

We learned the value of these precepts, which seemed at the time so much vanity and vexation, when we were promoted to the high distinction of riding a pony. Jumping Jenny was the inspiring name of this creature, and the good little lady in no way belied her designation. She was Exmoor bred, and an ideal boy's pony for a heavy banked country. Timber or water she could jump at need; but her two special points were the nimbleness with which she could climb up and down a great Devonshire bank, and her unfailing eye for a bog. She had not been brought up on Exmoor

for nothing. She knew the look of a bog far better than we knew it, and a team of elephants would scarcely have pulled her into it; certainly no boy would ever induce her to put foot into one.

She was as generous also as she was prudent. Though no consideration would make her set hoof on a real undoubted bog, she yet would face mere boggy ground in the most gallant fashion. Only once did she ever refuse a fence, and we carry in our mind still the time and place of that refusal and the overwhelming shock of astonishment it caused us. We had sent on our horses on the previous day, for the meet was some twenty miles from home. We were driven out in the morning in a dogcart by Authority, who was to ride a new horse that day, fresh to the country. The first covert drawn was a big furze brake, a sure find for foxes and woodcock, of which delectable birds we counted no less than fifteen come out at the corner where we stood awaiting the first whimper. From this covert there were several lines that the fox might take, all comparatively good except one. If he took that line we should find it, we had been told, very boggy, but the odds were some five to one against it. Nevertheless that, and none of the other four, was the line that perverse fox elected to take; and we found it, as we had been told, very boggy. Authority had the best of us all, for his horse, new to the big banks, refused the very first of them, and half a precious hour was passed in getting him over it; it was, by the way, one of our most stringent rules that if an animal once refused a fence he was to be put at it till he was over somehow, or till darkness closed the contest. In the intervals of his arguments with the new horse, Authority took a glimpse at Boyhood and Jumping Jenny growing con-

stantly more distant over a succession of banks, and noticed, as we were told afterwards, an undue elevation in the heels of Jenny after each ascent. In truth these banks were just a little higher than those to which we and Jenny were commonly accustomed and upset us a little in consequence. We pecked severely over several, but the ground was soft (a deal too soft!) and we were always up and on again, Jenny with a nose growing rapidly dirtier. Off the fifth bank the landing was terrible; Jenny was in up to the hocks, and the soft mud sucked lovingly as she drew each leg out of it. Some of the field were making play on firmer ground to the right. On the left was a big gray mare jammed tight in a ditch, while her late rider lay on his back in the soft bed of an indisputable bog. Poor Jenny was herself scarcely better than a fixture now, but there was no going back. The hounds were in front, and Devonshire fields are small. Together we struggled on, Boyhood sometimes afoot, sometimes, for a pace or two, in the saddle; Jenny was a mass of mud right up to the girths, and Boyhood equally muddy to an equal height. Still we plunged away until at length we floundered on to more solid ground close by the further bank of the field. There was now breathing-space to count-up our losses. These consisted of a broken curb-chain, the result of a particularly severe peck on Jenny's part, and a lost stirrup-leather. The latter loss was serious; but it was hopeless to attempt any search for them in that hardly-passed Slough of Despond; we were only too thankful to be out of it at such slight cost. Then we put Jenny at the low bank, beyond which was a beautifully hard high-road; anything hard looked beautiful after our late experience. To our utter amazement she would not



even offer to rise to it, but just stood stock still when she came to it. Three several times we put her at it, with spur and whip and adjuration, before we arrived at an understanding of this most extraordinary thing; and then we felt thoroughly ashamed of ourselves. Of course poor Jenny was so done by her efforts in dragging herself through that dreadful slough that she was literally incapable of rising to the fence, and we had beaten her and spurred her on that account! When we realised the position, we went near to shedding tears, of shame for ourselves and sorrow for Jenny; but in five minutes she had recovered her wind, and went over that bank like a cat.

The hounds were by this time goodness knew where; and, with the exception of goodness, the only being who knew anything at all about their doings during a great part of that run was Authority who, after succeeding in getting his horse over the bank, jumped him backwards and forwards several times before thinking about the hounds at all, and then began to look about him from the vantage post of the high-road. The road here runs along the watershed, giving a view into the lower ground on either side; and on his right he saw the hounds running hard with no one within some fields of them, and at intervals over the country a horse and rider fighting for life in a bog. He trotted along the high-road, watching the hunting hounds, and eventually, putting himself under the guidance of one of the road-riding brigade, cut off the pack, which by that time the huntsman had overtaken, by a cross lane.

Meanwhile Boyhood and Jumping Jenny, coming out on the high-road, met another very sorry fox-hunter, whose experiences had been similar, riding along it. Together we jogged in what we thought the most likely

direction, and by good luck soon fell in with the hounds and the field, the former having lost their fox and the latter being in an advanced stage of demoralisation. It seemed unlikely that more would be done that day, so we set off for a long ride home with Authority. Boyhood, after a twenty-two mile ride with only one stirrup on a dead-tired pony, was glad enough when the white bars of the turnpike gates (for there were pikes in those days) appeared through the gathering dusk to announce that he was nearly at home again.

This, was on the whole a somewhat dismal experience; but for a while at all events we had a greater delight in that hunting than in any other experience that life has ever held for us. It was, of course, the poorest kind of fun imaginable from the Meltonian's point of view; but it required nevertheless a certain amount of riding, and a certain degree of nerve in galloping up and down some very queer places. It was a country in which it was impossible to take your own line, being so intersected with what were locally called "bottoms," steep glens with a stream running through them, that it was almost necessary to follow the guidance of some one familiar with it. One of the most remarkable features about it all was the way in which great heavy fellows would follow the hounds on little Exmoor ponies no bigger than our Jenny. When they came to a bank they would jump off, send their pony over with a smack on the quarters, clamber up after, often by the aid of the pony's tail, then mount again, for the ponies would wait for them on the other side, and so on. This was a style of hunting which gave you fine opportunities of seeing the hounds at their work, though it is to be confessed that this was a very minor consideration to Boyhood, who

loved first and foremost the death of the fox, and secondly, plenty of jumping. It was not within Boyhood's philosophy that there could be any pleasure in galloping over enormous grass fields; he liked much better the Devonshire plan where the fields were small and the fences plentiful. Now and again we did get a mighty gallop over great unfenced spaces, but then there was a compensating quality of delight that made up to one for the loss of the jumping. Then one raced away over the moorland towards the blue sea, with the sniff of the salt breeze all the time in one's nostrils. They were always stout foxes, too, those that we found on the borders of the moorland and that took us straight away towards their well-known hold in the great seaward cliffs. There was one of these old fellows that we knew as well as a kelt knows a Jock Scott. We knew him by his brush, which was of a curious dusty gray, and probably he knew us and all the field and the hounds no less well. We found him always in the same covert; he stole out of it always at the same corner, gave just the same defiant wave of his brush as he settled into his stride, and went the same line, fence for fence and gap for gap, every year. After a mile or so we came to the open downs, golden with gorse-bushes in perpetual flower; but the old fox cared not a whit for the covert of the gorse-bushes, always holding on his line until he came to the cliff, where a hound or two generally fell a sacrifice on the beach below, unless the pack could be whipped off in time. At length, one year when we were beginning to be quite big boys, the old fox, sensibly grayer and dustier in the brush than last year, was viewed a mile and a half from his point and pulled down in the open within half a mile of it. His brush was one of our proudest trophies;

no interfering Diana happened to be in at the death that day to rob Boyhood of its best-deserved spoils; for though we had several other brushes and a mask or two, none had been the adornment of quite so gallant and famous a fox as this one.

No doubt we had our black letter as well as our red letter days. It happened to us once and again to be pounded; to come across a post and rails, though such obstacles were rare in our country, which Jumping Jenny, with the best heart in the world, could not negotiate. Then we had to go sadly round by a gap or a gateway, and by the time we had our heads straight again the hounds might be clean gone from sight and hearing. But this happened seldom, for Devonshire is the special happy hunting-ground of a boy on a small pony. Rider and steed of this quality are there equal to any others, and often it was a positive advantage to be able to creep through a small place in a hedge or bottom. We had hunted several times before it ever happened to us to come face to face with an obstacle in the nature of timber, and on this first occasion Jumping Jenny was more equal to the situation than her rider. Jenny landed deftly enough over the fence; but Boyhood found itself strangely dislodged from the saddle and perched on Jenny's neck in a manner at once undignified and uncomfortable. A hasty scramble back into the saddle was followed by a quick glance round to see whether the unfortunate adventure had been observed. A sardonic smile on the face of Authority was the only comment; but it was comment sufficient to make Boyhood swear in its heart that before next taking the field it would be a finished timber-jumper. In pursuance of this resolve we asked that a line of hurdles should be set up for practice on the lawn before the house. But

here Authority's acquiescence was qualified by a stringent condition: the hurdles might be put up and we might practise over them at will; but it was to be clearly understood that if Jenny refused them, as might happen in cold blood, we were to keep on putting her at those hurdles so long as the daylight lasted. We agreed, perforce, to this condition, and started, with some qualms, on the emprise. Boyhood was a trifle more cunning than Authority had expected. Authority, with the sardonic smile on his face, watched Boyhood riding down from the stables in the expectation that Jumping Jenny would be called on, then and there, to show that her title was merited. We were not quite so green as that. Our favourite reading, in this phase of our career, was the glorious and immortal history of Mr. John Jorrocks, M.F.H. Our hero of romance was Mr. James Pigg, and our very phrases were borrowed from this inspired book. Each fox we viewed was "the biggest fox whatever was seen"; our verdict on each night, as we looked out upon it from the window, was "hellish dark and smells of cheese." From so sapient a work it is impossible but that we should have picked up a certain share of cunning in matters pertaining to the horse, the hound, and the chase. Therefore, instead of bringing Jenny right down on the line of hurdles at the outgoing, we took her a little round about the lawn and into the next field first; and then, bringing her back towards the hurdles, with her head towards her stables, set her going at them in a canter, and over she hopped like a bird. Boyhood was disconcerted: the seat in the saddle was insecure for a moment, no doubt; but it had been drilled into us to sit well back, and after two or three further trials we enjoyed going over a hurdle a great deal better than

sitting in an armchair. After this no fence that we met in the hunting-field could puzzle us except, of course, those that beat us by their quantity rather than quality.

The quaintest incident that memory retains of our hunting days was the finish of a pottering run in a heavily wooded country where no fox would face the open. We had hunted him up and down the rides for the greater part of a day, and finally, with the scent at its hottest, we seemed to have lost the fox in the neighbourhood of a little cottage, with a pigstye tacked on to it. The hounds were giving tongue round the pigstye, while its occupants protested with no less noise. The hubbub was tremendous, and the tumult increased tenfold when the second whip climbed the stye palings and began to search the tenement for the missing fox. There was no sign of him. Still the hounds kept giving tongue around the dwelling as if the fox were there. The whip, after drawing the pigstye blank, knocked at the cottage door and, receiving no answer, entered. The sole inmate was a bed-ridden old woman who protested with vehemence equal to the pigs' against this invasion of her privacy; adding that no fox could possibly have come in, for the door had not been opened since her grandson had gone out to work in the morning. The man in pink was about to retire with apologies, when a bold hound burst in through the door, with a terrible burst of melody. He stopped to ask no questions of the poor old lady, but went under the bed like a tiger. More hounds dashed in; there was a scuffle and a worry under the bed, shrieks from the poor old woman that lay on it, furious death-notes of the hounds,—and in a second or two all was over. It took a deal of silver and consolation to make the lady realise that the hounds

had not killed her as well as the fox. She still protested solemnly that the fox could not have entered the cottage because the door had been shut all the time; but it was obvious enough, from the sootiness of the old fellow's coat, that his way in had been, not through the door, but down the chimney. The old lady suffered no harm; indeed, the shock and the hubbub did her a world of good. Her grandson reported afterwards that he had never known her so well and lively for years as she was for a few days after this excitement.

Another day comes back to us, the brightest of all the triumphs shared by Jenny and Boyhood. We were waiting, while hounds were drawing a big covert, on the far side from that where most of the field were watching. There was a fox at home, for the hounds threw their tongues bravely and continuously, and yet, while the greater volume of sound grew distant, it seemed that nearer at hand an echo of it still sounded in the covert. Therefore we stayed, while every nerve of Jenny's little body quivered in her excitement. Nearer and nearer came this lesser chorus until, almost beneath our nose, a fine red fox slunk stealthily out and away over the stubble before us. We waited, as we had been well warned to do, until he was a hundred yards out in the open, before crying *tally-ho* with all the force of our young lungs. At the same moment there burst from the covert two hounds, no more, hot on the scent. Larger experience might have taught us that these could be but two stragglers from the pack, that the rest were away out on the far side of the covert after another fox: larger experience might have taught us that our duty was to whip off these two errant ones and send

them back to the body of the pack; but Boyhood does not always know, or heed, its duty, and if Jenny knew better, she told us nothing. Such a run we had! Across that stubble, out over the grass field beyond, and on to a plough, only ourselves, Jenny, and those two hounds—and there they viewed the fox. They raced, and the fox, being fresh, raced too. How long he might have kept away from them one cannot say, for at the far end of that plough a stark obstacle confronted him. In that country they build the walls of their fruit-gardens of a clayish concrete, with a straw thatch on top to keep the rain out. Fruit-trees grow better on these than on any other walls, and it was one of these that our fox had before him across the plough. He went at it bravely, but the take-off was none too good. Still he clung a moment, with teeth and pads, on the thatching; then the treacherous straw gave way, and he slid scrambling down the wall. Again he went at it, but in a hurried, hustled fashion, for now the two hounds were hard on him. Again he clung a moment to the thatch, then down again he slid almost into the hounds' mouths. There was a snarl, a worry, and all was over. Boyhood, alone, with a single couple of hounds had killed a fox. With enormous labour, and much scolding, we managed to perform the obsequies with a pocket-knife, and trotted off in fine feather with the trophies, after the two hounds had munched the carcase. The errant couple followed, with sterns proudly erect, and when, later in the day, we succeeded in falling in with the rest of the field, neither the Master nor other Authority had the heart to say a word to spoil Boyhood's sense of triumph.

## THE SEAT OF JUSTICE.

"It is perfectly monstrous!" said I. "This is the fourth letter I have written to Her Majesty's Office of Works on the want of a proper chair from which to dispense even-handed justice to the British public."

"My love," suggested Mrs. de Lex, "why not take one of the chairs from your study?"

I made some observation about "dangerous precedent," but Mrs. de Lex said "Stuff," in a tone which quenched argument. "Well, my dear," said I, "I'll,—I'll write to the Department." I did write, a forcible, and, I flatter myself, also an elegant letter, setting forth the discomfort of myself and my brother Justice during the long hours we were on the Bench, begging the Board to take the matter into their favourable consideration and supply the Court with a suitable seat of justice. A week passed and I received an answer from the Secretary.

1896 BOARD OF WORKS.

B  
SIR,

May 27, 189—.

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 20th inst., requesting that the article named in margin may be supplied by this department, and in reply I have to inform you that I will lay the letter before the Board at their next meeting, and communicate to you their decision on the subject.

I have the honour to be, your most humble Servant, JOHN P. ROBINSON (Secretary to the Board).

To C. de Lex, Esq.,  
Police Magistrate,  
S.W. District.

This, so far, was satisfactory, and I triumphantly snubbed my wife who had ventured to hint that I should find my application treated with contempt. Weeks, however, rolled away

and the decision of the Board was still unrevealed. I sent another despatch, another, and yet a third; but to none came any answer. Then I grew angry, and penned a sarcastic note. This had the desired result.

2994  
No. C.  
SIR,

BOARD OF WORKS.  
July 28, 189—.

I have the honour, by the direction of the Board of Works, to acknowledge the correspondence cited in the margin, and to inform you in reply that the Board has given your application their full and most complete attention. The practice, however, of supplying judicial Chairs to Justices is one which has not hitherto obtained in this Department. I am directed, however, to inform you that the Board will again consider this somewhat important matter with a view to bringing it under the notice of the Right Honourable the Secretary for the Home Department at an early date.

I am further instructed to say that your sarcastic observations are not only incorrect, but considered by the Board to be quite uncalled for.

I have the honour to be, &c., JOHN P. ROBINSON.

I was staggered. What vast machinery had I not set in motion! Heaven knows I had no desire to trouble the Right Honourable the Secretary for the Home Department. I would write to him and apologise; like an ass I did so.

In three months' time I received back my letter, marked in red, in blue, and in green ink, minuted in all directions, and commented upon in all kinds of handwriting. "Noted and returned. M.P.S."—"Not on the business of this department. O.G.S."—"Refer to the Paste and Scissors Office. M.B."—"Apparently forwarded in error. L.B.O."—Across the right-



hand bottom corner of this maltreated document was written in a fine bold hand : "Communications on this subject must be made to the Rt. Honble. the Chief Secretary through the Gunnybag and Postage Stamp Department *only*. O.K." This was decisive, though who O.K. was, and what the Gunnybag and Postage Stamp Department had to do with seats of Justice I could not tell. I wrote again to the Board and after waiting the usual time, received the following reply :

3693

X

SIR,

BOARD OF WORKS.

October 9, 189-.

I have the honour, by the direction of the Board, to inform you that they cannot at present move in the matter named in the margin. The subject has occupied the attention of the Board for the last six months, but after mature consideration they fail to see how your request can be complied with unless by the direct authority of the Cabinet.

I am instructed to suggest that perhaps in the meantime, as the case seems urgent, and times are bad and agriculture depressed, the construction of a little platform to raise the old one to the desired height might meet the difficulty.

I have the honour to be, &c., J. P. ROBINSON.

Meet the difficulty ! No, nor half of it, but I must submit. The little platform was duly constructed, and nearly cut short my career as a metropolitan magistrate ; in fact this precious device was of such a dangerous nature that the Insurance Office demanded an extra premium on my life, which I may here observe, the Government has as yet shown no intention of repaying me. At length, after several accidents in taking my seat on the Bench owing to this confounded little platform, I wrote to the half-hearted Robinson. "No one but an idiot," said I, "could have made such a preposterous proposition, which has on several occasions nearly disabled my colleague and myself." The phleg-

matic creature replied after three weeks as follows.

3792

X

SIR,

BOARD OF WORKS.

November 7, 189-.

I have the honour to acknowledge your communication of the 16th ult., in which you inform me that I am an idiot, as per margin ; and in reply thereto beg to inform you that on that point a difference of opinion exists in this department.

I have the honour to be, &c., J. P. ROBINSON.

This seemed to be a fatal blow to my hopes, but I wrote again, begged to withdraw the offensive expression made in the heat of the moment, and to request that the Board would condescend to take my petition into earnest consideration. Mr. Robinson replied in a temperate and forgiving spirit. "The Board," he observed, "are most desirous to comply with your request, and I am directed to state for your information that a proposal to amalgamate the votes for furniture and patent revolving beacons will be made to the Government, which amalgamation will enable the Board to issue the article as per margin. I am desired to ask if you have any suggestions to offer with regard to width, height, stuffing, &c." I could not see the point of this amalgamation, nor its bearing on my case, but I replied courteously ; and at the same time I wrote to my friend O'Dowd, Member for Northam, to beg him to make a proper representation on the subject. O'Dowd, I should say, was at that time in Opposition.

My hopes ran high when, on the following Thursday, O'Dowd delivered himself of a terrific speech in which he accused the Government of the most wanton barbarity, and drew such a terrible picture of Justice as not only blind, but as likely, through the parsimony of the Government, to become also halt and maimed, that it brought tears into my eyes as I read

it. Barnstrake, however, who had kept two government-clerks at work night and day copying the correspondence, replied in his usual calm and dignified manner. O'Dowd was muzzled; but encouraged by the support of THE DAILY TRUMPETER moved for a Commission to inquire into the subject, with power to call for persons and papers.

The Commission was granted, sat at Westminster for seven mortal weeks, examined two hundred and sixty witnesses, ordered plans and specifications of all sorts of chairs from the period of the Coronation Chair to the latest design of the present day at a cost of £1,000, and finally published a report of eight hundred pages, containing a complete history of Seats of Justice from the reign of King Solomon to that of Queen Victoria.

Nothing was done during the recess, but when the House was about to meet again, THE DAILY TRUMPETER was informed that the special report on the "subject of Seats of Justice, which, we understand, will shortly be laid on the table of the House, contains some startling revelations, and proves beyond a doubt the necessity for an absolute Free-Trade policy." Forthwith into the fray rushed the Protectionist paper, and proved entirely to its own satisfaction that the only way to make mankind happy was to encourage the growth of industry by severe protective duties. "It is rumoured," said this journal, "that an effort will be made by the hardware and soft goods faction to import the two thousand Chairs of State required for the various judicial benches. Such an act would shame the cheek of modesty. We trust that a patriotic Government will look to it. We have imported too long. Our short-sighted and venal contemporary, not satisfied with importing its bruisers,

bulls, editors, and pedestrians, must needs attack the country in its most vital point, and stab it in its *seat of honour!*"

The controversy was highly interesting, but we were daily liable to become crippled for life from our little platform. I wrote to Barnstrake. That illustrious statesman replied, "that while deprecating the indiscreet haste which I had displayed in the treatment of a matter of so much importance," he was willing to do everything in his power, and after consulting with his colleagues, had given instructions to the Chief Commissioner of Police to forward a Windsor chair which would perhaps satisfy me in the meantime. No chair came, but a very large official letter from the Chief Commissioner, in which he regretted that, all the chairs of his department being in constant use, he was unable to comply with the request of the Honourable the Comptroller, but that he had forwarded my letter (forwarded to him *through* the department of the Right Hon. the Chief Secretary) to the Commander-in-Chief with a request that he would give the matter his immediate attention.

Three weeks passed, and I received a letter from the Commander-in-Chief, who in a military memorandum in red ink begged to forward me copies of the correspondence between the Hon. the Comptroller of Gunnybags, the Chief Commissioner of Police, and himself, and to attach a list of articles with which "it was in his power to supply me through the usual official channel." The list contained every article under heaven except the one I required. I wrote again to Barnstrake, and received the following answer:

*Private.*

DEAR DE LEX,

I don't see how to please you, but as the matter will be brought before the House.

shortly, and those confounded fellows in the Opposition will be sure to make a handle of it, I have begged a personal interview with H.R.H., stated your case, and asked him, as an old friend of my cousin Lord Lofty, to help me. H.R.H., in the kindest and most delicate manner, has sent me an old porter's chair, discarded, I believe, by one of the royal domestics, and placed entirely at your service. For goodness' sake, my dear fellow, keep the matter dark, for I sadly fear that so irregular a proceeding will result in some confusion in this Department.

Yours, S. B.

P.S.—I rely on your brother's powerful support in the event of a General Election.

I waited patiently till early in the following spring when the estimates were before the House. In the supplementary estimates appeared the following item: "*Comptroller of Gunnybags*. Division, 492; subdivision 8. For erecting platform on the Magistrates' Bench at———Police Court. 12s. 9d." It was thought there would be a row. The Treasurer trembled when he submitted the fatal item to the House, and an ominous silence reigned. "I would ask the Right Hon. the Treasurer," said Mr. Wiggintop, rising, "if this piece of wanton extravagance is to be paid for by the British tax-payer?" "Of course," answered a rash member from the Government benches. Wiggintop sat down, and those who knew his antipathy to Downing Street trembled for the fate of the Ministry.

The next morning THE DAILY TRUMPETER laughed bitterly. "So then, this is the way in which the British tax-payer is robbed to support the liveried myrmidons of an effete and palsied aristocracy." The Ministry at once resigned, and Wiggintop was sent for. He formed a Ministry in twenty-four hours and went to the country with the fatal chair nailed to the masthead of his future policy. "It shall be my business," said he at an enthusiastic meeting of his con-

stituents, "to see that every halfpenny of this scandalous charge is paid out of the Royal Exchequer."

When Parliament met, Wiggintop called for "all the correspondence connected with this gross case of Imperial tyranny." He did so, and, to the triumph of his Party, it was resolved by an overwhelming majority that the question should be immediately referred to the Privy Council. I imagined that all was now over; but by the next post I heard that a Royal Commission had been appointed with power to examine witnesses and call for books and papers. Of course my evidence was required, but my blood was up now and I would not shrink from my duty. I wrote to the Secretary, to the Commission, but received no answer. I waited a month and then, having primed myself with names, called in Downing Street. It was what people who read the newspapers call the silly season, and London was empty. A messenger was elegantly lounging on the steps, and to him I addressed myself. "Is Lord Lofty within?" "No, his Lordship is in Greece." "Mr. Porchester Jones?" "Gone to Norway." "Mr. Washington White?" "In the South of France." "Mr. Fitz-Clarence Plantagenet?" "At Boulogne." "Good gracious," said I in despair, "is there no one to look after these four millions of London's inhabitants?" "I think you'll find a young gentleman upstairs," said the messenger carelessly.

I went upstairs, and after some investigation found the young gentleman who looked after the Department. He was a very spruce and very small young gentleman, with a flower in his coat and a glass in his eye. He stared at me as I entered as though to say, "What the deuce do you mean, coming into a Government Office in this way?"

"Mr. Cackleby Smallpiece, I believe?" said I.

"Quite so, what can I do for you?"

"I have called about the Police Court Chair Commission."

"Ah! door B., first on the right, third turning to the left,—not here,—mistake."

"Pardon me, sir, I have called there and they referred me to you."

"Oh, did they? Ah, well, what is it?"

"I wrote some time ago to Mr. Washington White who acts as Secretary to the Commission."

"What Commission?"

"The Police-Court-Chair-Commission."

"Oh, ah! Is there such a thing? Quite so,—didn't know,—beg your pardon,—go on."

"My name is De Lex, Police Magistrate at ———Police-Court."

"All right, De Lex, sit down. So you are the Police Magistrate at L—— Court?"

"Yes, the L—— Court."

"Oh, ah, yes! Stupid of me, but the L's are not in my Department, don't you see? I take the B's; but however, never mind,—I dare say we shall get on. You want to see White?"

"Well, no," said I, "I want to know——"

"Hadn't you better put it in writing, De Lex? Put it in writing now."

"There's no occasion for that; I have already written to Mr. White."

"Ah!" says the young gentleman, at once relieved. "Why didn't you say so before? Tomkins, bring me Mr. White's letter-book."

Tomkins brought it, and Mr. Smallpiece perused it. "You must be under a mistake, De Lex; there's no letter mentioned here."

"But I wrote one, sir," I ventured to remark.

"I rather think *not*, De Lex. You must be in error, De Lex."

"But, my dear sir——"

"But *my* dear sir, the thing's as plain as a pikestaff. We register all our letters, of course; now there is no letter registered *here*, so we couldn't have received one. Don't you see?"

"Perhaps it might have escaped you," I hesitated again.

He smiled a patronising smile: "My dear Mr. de Lex, our system of registration is perfect, simply perfect; it couldn't have escaped us."

Just then the door was burst open, and there entered another gentleman with a letter in his hand. "Hullo!" said Smallpiece quite unabashed. "Here it is! Egad, that's strange! Thanks, my dear Carnaby, thanks. Now, sir [to me severely as if I had been in fault], perhaps you can explain your business."

A bright idea struck me; I would inquire as to the probable result of my inquiries. "That letter, sir, fully explains my business. May I ask you what will become of it?"

"Become of it? It is the property of the office, sir."

"But what will be done with it?"

"It will go through the usual official course, I presume," said Mr. Smallpiece.

"And what is that, may I ask?"

"Oh," said the young man, waving the letter as he spoke, "Mr. White will hand it to Mr. Paget, who will minute it and send it on to Mr. Jones. He will pass it through his Department, and then it will in the usual official course reach Mr. Secretary Sandwith; he will send it to the Commissioners."

"Oh, and what then?"

"Well, the Commissioners will have it read and entered in their minutes, and then, unless they choose

to send it to the Privy Council, they will return it to us in the usual course."

"As——"

"From Mr. Secretary Sandwith to Mr. Jones, from Mr. Jones to Mr. Paget, from Mr. Paget to Mr. White, from Mr. White to me."

"And what would you do with it?"

"I should hand it to the Chief," said Mr. Smallpiece.

"And what would become of it then?"

Mr. Smallpiece admired his boot gloomily, and said at last: "'Pon my life, De Lex, I don't know. The Chief is rather absent and, between ourselves, when once a document gets into his hands, 'gad, there's no telling *what* he may do with it."

"Sir," said I in a rage, "I wish you good morning."

"Good morning, De Lex," said Mr. Smallpiece with perfect affability; "anything more we can do

for you, you know, delighted, I'm sure."

I did not pause to ask what would become of my letter in the alternative of the Commission choosing to hand it to the Privy Council, but left the office. Outside were some thirty or forty of the cloud of witnesses. "Ha, ha!" they laughed. "Here is Mr. de Lex; he can tell us all about it. Where is the Commission, De Lex? We've been all over London looking for it."

"Gentlemen," said I, "it may be in the moon for all I know of it. If I don't go home and go to bed, I shall be a subject for Bedlam."

I am waiting still. The Commission is still sitting, I suppose, for I hear at intervals of the wonderful progress they are making with the vast mass of interesting evidence which somebody will have the honour to transmit to me in the usual official course. But if ever I write to the Department again may I——!



## A GREAT ENGLISH CHRONICLE.

NEXT in value to the inheritance which a modern Englishman possesses in the great body of his literature, is, perhaps, his inheritance in the varied architecture of his fair, and, on the whole, very fortunate island. But while England's written chronicle from Bede and Alfred belongs to the race at large, and equally to every branch of the widely scattered English family, her chronicle in stone, and in the humbler materials of brick and mortar, is the peculiar heritage of the home-keeping Briton. Freely circulating wherever the race and language have spread, the one is as readily accessible in San Francisco or Melbourne as in London or Edinburgh; the other, although in a valid sense an inheritance of the race as a whole, is not, for obvious reasons, capable of the same world-wide diffusion. Like Luther's Bible, this chronicle is a chained book.

In the present instance the undeniable privilege of possession is tempered by some responsibility. It is true that of late years this fact has received a certain amount of recognition, and that the more splendid pages of the architectural volume are just now somewhat effectually cared for and likely to be preserved at least to immediate posterity. But while the ivy-covered fortress and ruined abbey are sedulously propped, and the baronial hall, the cathedral, and the venerable parish church more or less judiciously renovated, other important regions of architecture are less fortunate. It is in the great commercial and manufacturing centres, and in the villages clustering about them (or which once clustered about them), that the most

hopeless ruin perhaps is wrought. Here, and in the picturesque High Streets and old-world squares and market-places of the elder towns, the "grim wolf," not of war or famine, but of peace, plenty, and universal increase, "daily devours apace"—now swallowing up a fine old Elizabethan hall, now a mansion of the seventeenth or eighteenth century with its grounds, now a whole row of quaint half-timbered cottages, now a pleasant farm-house, now an ancient inn; and all this not with "privy paw," like the Popish wolf of Milton, but openly and before our waking eyes. The changes in the outward face of English towns and villages, the havoc and general obliteration which this well-fed, but insatiable monster has wrought in the last fifteen or twenty years, are greater probably than in any similar period since he began his ravages.

Close and many are the links of association which bind our history, poetry, drama, and fiction, that is to say, our national life, to the pages of this ancient architectural record. Almost every picture from the earliest which our poetry calls forth, has a background in native architecture. Caedmon sings his CREATION in the hall of a Northumbrian monastery. Chaucer's light-minded company, "from every shire's end of England," meet at a London inn before their final journey to the Cathedral City. Castles, courts, dungeons, palaces, country houses and town houses, streets and inns, along with camps, battlefields, and enchanted forests, fill the pages of the great Elizabethans; Shakespeare

especially abounds in palaces and taverns. Their themes may carry us to France, Italy, Greece, Rome, or the ends of the universe, for the imaginations of the old dramatists knew no bounds; but we make these magnificent excursions through the doors of old English playhouses, and between the projecting gables of old English streets. So, too, in the period of Milton and the Puritans. We cover vast ranges of spiritual geography, celestial and infernal, but the great visionary himself is corporeally lodged for the most part in such homely precincts as Bread Street, Fleet Street, Aldersgate Street, Barbican, and Jewin Street. Again leaving that troubled time, with the makers of mundane history busy at the congenial task of smashing painted windows and mural sculpture, and bombs, "like mad evil spirits," invading even the repose of cathedral aisles,—and coming to the milder age of Addison, we find the polite periwigs of that polished era translating Homer, and writing their neat essays on Man, Immortality, and the Pleasures of the Imagination, amid the familiar environment of London coffee-houses, and under the shadow of the resurgent St. Paul's and the new churches of Wren. As we approach still nearer to our own day, the links of this connection become even closer, from the more direct and picturesque treatment which architecture begins to receive. Somewhat early in the last century, Thomas Gray, a Cambridge scholar of repute, set the seal of his exquisite genius on the ivy-crowned church and yew-shadowed churchyard of rural England, with all the images, sentiments, and associations which gather round them; in one fortunate poem preserving for all time to the dispersed Anglo-Saxon tribes of America, India, Africa, and Polynesia, the most perfect picture ever yet limned of the most beautiful, most harmonious,

most pathetic, and at the same time the commonest object in the moralised English landscape. A little later arose the great-hearted Wizard of the North. To him probably more than to any other writer is due the revived, or rather perhaps the first created, popular interest in the feudal relics of Great Britain, which dates from about the beginning of the present century. Taking under his especial guardianship, along with the mountains and streams of his beloved Scotland, all the castles, abbeys, priories, ancient halls, manors, and moated granges of this island, in what state of repair soever, he made them beautiful, filled them with the brilliant company we all know, or should know, and informed them with a vivid life and interest which they might never have possessed but for the magic of his wand. Then followed the great and famous company of modern English writers whose line has gone out into all the earth. With them—the poets, historians, novelists, and essayists of the early and middle part of the century, who made the life of modern, or relatively modern English people, familiar wherever English books are read—grew up a new order of interest and association. The architectural background here is that of the busy, prosperous England of the early steam-age; the age of the new railways with their embankments, bridges, and stations; of suburban villas (detached and semi-detached) twenty and thirty instead of four or five miles from town; of the cotton-spinners', iron-masters', and railway kings' new country seats; of the summer tourist, and the new seaside and mountain hotels; of Yorkshire mills made as interesting as Yorkshire monasteries by the genius of Brontë, and London streets of the Victorian age made as delightful as those of the Elizabethan age by the

genius of Dickens. Of Barchester Towers, Gatherum Castle, Framley Parsonage, Shepperton Church, and Locksley Hall,—of Bleak House, the White Horse Inn, Boffin's Bower, and the other side of Goswell Street.

This is the pleasant, complex, new and old picture of the face of mid-century England, which, aided by the already too profuse arts of illustration, went forth into Greater Britain with the names of Dickens, Thackeray, Trollope, Tennyson, George Eliot, and Charlotte Brontë. But it is already a fading picture; for now succeeds our own absorbing epoch, with its own galaxy of geniuses, who though eminently worthy shall for the present be nameless; and with its own achievements in the builder's art, whereof more anon.

It would of course be idle to speak of the worth to the nation at large, and to the scattered portions of the English, or rather the British, household, of the more splendid pages of the architectural chronicle; of the mediæval and feudal pages especially. Their worth, though not so universally admitted as many suppose, is now generally recognised, and, as we have said, they are likely, with embellishments and additions of our own, to be handed down in a fair state of preservation to a grateful and appreciative posterity. But the worth of the humbler pages,—the secular, civic, domestic pages—is not so widely recognised; and their chance of being preserved for the enjoyment of future generations is considerably less. Yet these humbler pages form not only the bulk, but also in some respects, the more important portions of the book; for it is almost needless to say that the comparatively few great or remarkable buildings of a country do not determine the character of its architecture so much as the broad and common features of

the street and the roadside, of the town, village, and hamlet, which meet us at every turn. And it is just these which make, or once made, the peculiar felicity of English scenery; which fill out and complete the picture whose central objects are the castle and the cathedral, the princely country seat and the rich mediæval parish church. It is these common features, along with the unmatched freshness and delicacy of the English landscape, which have been the delight of poets and the encomium of travellers. From Miss Mitford to Mr. Ruskin, from Washington Irving to Nathaniel Hawthorne and M. Taine, there has been no diversity of opinion as to their charm. No fairer homes can be found in fiction than those which are drawn in *OUR VILLAGE*; none in what is called real life than those which are, or were, to be seen in the "lowland hamlets of Beddington and Carshalton," the defilement of whose pleasant waters is lamented in the *CROWN OF WILD OLIVE*. The native compares shire with shire, the stranger compares them with his own country, and both with an increasing appreciation of their manifold merits. Where elsewhere, in the Anglo-Saxon world at least, can be found such lovely old town and country houses? Where such incomparable old inns and cottages, such picturesque farm-houses, barns, and gateways? Where elsewhere such delightful old High Streets, such pleasant old-world squares and market-places? The tourist is drawn by the far-famed castle and minster, and discovers their common and secular environment to be equally surprising. Warwick is as interesting as its fortress; Canterbury and Winchester are as wonderful as their cathedrals; the closes of Norwich, Lichfield, and Salisbury, are as beautiful as the spires that overshadow them. To say truth,

this frigid northern islet of Britain, which but for the amiable influence of the Gulf Stream would probably be nothing but another Labrador or Newfoundland, is, and has long been, a heaped up storehouse of natural and architectural as well as historical treasures ; of places and things "too fair to be looked upon but only on holidays," and on golden sunshiny holidays in May or June, which live in happy memory. Truly, oh strong Mother of many strong peoples, thy former children built for thee beautifully and well in the old days ! But unless thou look to it thy latter progeny will undo the work of their fathers.

Of course this is the bright side, the holiday side. We know well that there are, and have long been, grimy towns as well as gracious towns, black counties as well as beautiful counties. But such things must be in the home of a strenuous and active people. A good workman is known by his chips, and the same is true of a working nation. England is emphatically a working, a toiling nation ; and her grimy towns and black counties are merely the chips, the inevitable parings and filings, thrown off in the multiplicity of her virtuous labours. Nor are these work-places necessarily ugly ; but even when they are ugly, undeniably and deeply ugly, they possess the unique interest of ugliness, and the interest also of anti-thesis. The steeped towns would lose half their charm were it not for their sharp contrast to the chimneyed towns. It is not the chimneys, the smoke, the blackness, in their proper place, which mar the holiday picture ; it is when the grimy town overlaps and swallows up the gracious town, park, or neighbourhood ; this is the particular abomination of desolation standing where it ought not, against which the feeble critic raises his voice.

The ravages of our demon of prosperity (it might be writ of democracy)

are most observable, as we have said, in the wide tract of architecture between the cottage home and the stately home,—or rather in the tract including both. A slight study of his modes of action shows them to be generally modes of destruction pure and simple, and modes of bad or inharmonious building ; or of the two modes combined. This latter form of action is sufficiently familiar to us, being chiefly seen in the suburbs of large cities, where a good many, if not most of us, have to live. How complete in many cases this destructive and reconstructive process is, obliterating all former landmarks, many know to their cost ; and also in these latter times how rapidly it is carried on. The semi-rural dwellings of earlier generations with their ampler gardens, shrubberies and lawns, seem to be the most tempting prey of the devourer, who has also an especially keen tooth for historic houses and their grounds. The rapidity with which a pleasant domain of this latter kind is transmuted into close lines of tenements and shops, or minute villas of ludicrously uniform pattern, can be paralleled only by the speed with which the jungle swallowed up the wicked native village in Mr. Kipling's tale. Only here it is not "letting in the jungle," but letting in London, Manchester, or Birmingham. But although this phenomenon has become so familiar that we now hardly notice it, and commonly accept it as the inevitable result of commercial prosperity, our demon is the very genius of increase ; its effect, with but few exceptions, is the degradation of architecture. All good architecture by general admission is of slow, or at least of moderately slow, growth.

There is na workeman  
That can bothe worken well and hastilie,  
This must be done at leisure parfaitlie,—

and there is nothing leisurely now in the growth of English and American cities. This particular form of building activity, however, though bad enough where it is operative, is less hurtful to the broader aspects of architecture than certain others, being confined to the greater business and manufacturing centres, which, though of importance, are after all, but a part of the whole; and its erections, also, are seldom permanent, as these small tenement and villa tracts are often, as if by Nemesis, swept away themselves after a short life by factories, public works, and large commercial buildings.

More widespread and lasting by far, and more serious because almost impossible of remedy, is the injury done in the gracious towns themselves. By this we mean the gradual, but none the less sure, effacement of the peculiar features which make, or once made, them, not merely old-world and interesting, but also distinctively native and English. Fortunately in most of the cathedral and abbey towns, and in other smaller towns of which we may speak, the progress of this effacement is comparatively slow; its movement, however, can be easily seen, and its ultimate result predicted with a degree of certainty. And in most cases the result would probably be this: that while the more important features,—the cathedrals, abbeys, and parish churches, with our own additions and embellishments—would remain, with the more noted secular buildings, such as the old hospitals and a few specimens of the early overhanging gables,—the wider architectural features,—the indescribable felicities of the old corners, the quaint groupings of chimneys, roofs, and gables, the happy combinations of form and colour—which make the present charm of many of the old streets and squares, would disappear, and their place be taken by architec-

ture of a wholly different kind. That is, while the monumental and famous edifices would be more carefully propped and preserved than ever, the towns themselves would be gradually rebuilt and modernised. But this, it will be said, is exactly what has always been going on. The ecclesiastical and other famous structures have stood with but slight alteration, while in the towns which surround them one type of building has succeeded another since the beginning; and the happy variety of new and old which we now see is the fortuitous result. But unluckily for the continuance of this ideal development, the buildings which are just now taking the place of the old, in too many instances give no possible hope of future picturesqueness, indeed forbid the hope. This is not because they are different from anything that went before: the various successions of the earlier periods were often that; but because they have no affinity with their surroundings, and can never be harmonised with them. Some of the many new types,—those for example with the Mansard and other forms of modern Continental roof and ornament—are exotics in England, and have always since their importation been at war with the elements of the architecture of the country and smaller provincial towns; much more opposed even than the old classical importations, some of which may be said to have become in a manner naturalised. Other types are equally at variance from being bad in themselves; a notable case in point being the now very prevalent one, which, with nothing else in common with Gothic, adorns, or covers itself with its features, lancet windows, clustered columns, decorated capitals, and the like—to such an extent that it may be styled the order of ecclesiastical hotel and cathedral villa. Still another type belonging to the same category of intrinsic badness,



is merely the order of profuse and purposeless ornament laid on as if with a trowel. This, indeed, seems to be the bane of modern domestic architecture,—minute, elaborate, heaped-up decoration. “We must run glittering like a brook in the open sunshine or we are unblest.” Plain living, so far as the exterior of our houses is concerned, if not high thinking, is no more, and will be no more while the prevailing architect believes that decoration is synonymous with beauty and its absence with the reverse. Besides these, certain abnormal developments of the bastard Queen Anne style might be named; and here and there one may discern symptoms of the sky-scraping structures of New York, and newer London, as yet, however, mere pigmies by comparison, sky-scrapers, as it were, in the bud. But the subject is trite, and the multiplication of unfortunate modern instances is superfluous and unprofitable.

It is, therefore, a relief to turn to the many admirable examples of purely modern building,—examples good in themselves and in complete harmony with the older environment—which are to be found in the towns in question, and also in the country. These sufficiently prove the possibility of handing down the architectural succession in a line of almost unbroken excellence; and prove also that the bad instances just cited are not an absolutely necessary product of our time and conditions. But there is another factor in good building besides felicity of design, which we are told can no longer be counted on. This is the human factor; the old “village workman who knew all kinds of work and built in unconscious, simple picturesqueness,” and to whom the older building owes its admirable and enduring qualities. At what precise period he became extinct we know not;

but although his homely art probably began to decline two hundred or more years ago, we are disposed to think it was not finally crushed out by the all-pervading power of machinery until about thirty years since, for up to the latter date evidences of its existence are to be found. It is unquestionable, however, that he is extinct now, and that the common craftsman of to-day if left to himself will not build in unconscious, simple picturesqueness, but in exactly the reverse manner; hence the too well-grounded fear for the future of permanently good architecture.

“My godmother lived in a handsome house in the clean and ancient town of Bretton,” says Lucy Snowe in *VILLETTE*. We have long been trying to find this delectable Bretton, and its “handsome house” with “clear, wide windows looking down on a fine antique street, where Sundays and holidays seemed always to abide;” and although we are not yet certain of the identity of either, we believe the town to be one of the smaller country or market towns, which, though not presided over by cathedral or abbey, may yet be called “gracious.” These smaller English towns, with many others that have neither court nor market, form a pleasant if not indispensable chapter of the architectural volume. They have, or should have, at least one very gray and ancient parish church with spire, or tower, seen from afar; a goodly grammar school of King Edward’s, or some respectable later foundation; a picturesque manor house; and a circulating library. The centre of the whole system, however, if one may so speak, is the High Street. In this “fine antique” thoroughfare, besides the grammar school and the library, are, or should be, one or two ancient inns and posting houses,—a Blue Boar or a Green Dragon; the sleepy country bank, the post-office,

the shops ; and, either in or near it, a score or so of old brick, stucco, or stone, dwellings of the type of the handsome house in VILLETTE. They are not always very old, these houses, most of them having been built, as we surmise, from one hundred to one hundred and fifty years ago ; and hence they belong to the order of modern, or middle-age, antiquity. But although very plain in the matter of ornament,—often indeed without any other than their immaculate curtains, bow-pots, and clambering vines—they are in many cases serenely beautiful, and put wholly out of countenance the more elaborately-tricked mansions of to-day. And besides their intrinsic charm they have another interest. For in them, and in such towns as these, lived, moved, and had their being, no small number of those illustrious personages of modern, or relatively modern, fiction, whose fame as we said, has gone out into all the earth. Middlemarch was such a town as this ; Mr. Pecksniff dwelt in one of these houses ; Lilly Dale in another, and better ; in these ancient inns sojourned Pickwick the immortal, and his philosophic followers ; the inspired young curates and vicars of Dr. Macdonald ministered, and may yet minister, in these gray churches ; here lived Adam Bede, Amos Barton, Mr. Gilfil, the repentant Janet, and the evangelical Mr. Tryon, the elder Pendennis, Dr. Thorne, Mr. Crawley—the names would fill a book. And besides these, there is, perhaps,

an equally delightful host still waiting in the limbo of unwritten fiction who may one day come forth and inhabit these pleasant mansions. Hence on more than one account, the regret that these smaller towns, like the larger ones we have mentioned, should be invaded by the spoiler,—that these beautiful old English houses should ever be supplanted by the French roof, the cathedral villa, and the much adorned nondescript.

But we are told that such things must be after our famous victories in science, mechanics, and commerce ; we must bear the penalty of the resultant ugliness. Perhaps not ; with the bane is found also the antidote. Our very activities may, and do, sharpen our perception both of excellence and of its pernicious contrary. We may yet awake to the fact that these humbler pages of our national chronicle are in their degree as worthy to be preserved as the more splendid ones. And when it has finally dawned upon us that the old streets and houses which so charm the home-turning Americans, and which are beginning to interest the Canadians, Australians, and New Zealanders, are after all a valuable part of our common architectural heritage, we may perhaps not waste and destroy them so wantonly as we do. Only the awakening must not be too long deferred ; for the grim wolf gnaws steadily, and once lost they will not be easily restored.

## MADEMOISELLE DACQUIN.

FRENCHWOMEN have always played a part in the history of their country's literature, but comparatively seldom through the writing of books. The poets and authors among them have worked on an equality with men and charmed their generation, but they have often sacrificed personal influence to their talent and labour. On the other hand the women whose names survive longest have often subordinated their literary instincts to the interests of their salon and conversation, or of their friendships and correspondence. In our own century we can cite Mme. de Beaumont, Mme. de Custine, and Eugénie de Guérin, among women who gave abundant proof of the faculty for writing, and who left only journals and letters; Eugénie de Guérin's pen was devoted exclusively to a brother of genius. These are the feminine names longest remembered in France. The novelists are often strangely forgotten; the letter-writers make landmarks for the critics of all time; their names appear again and again, and seem to form a family with long descent.

We are reminded of this family by the recent death in Paris of Mdlle. Jenny Dacquin, whose name will always be identified with a literary friendship. The greatest reserve, almost a mystery indeed, was always maintained about her personality; but in April, 1892, she made herself known finally in *L'INTERMÉDIAIRE DES CHERCHEURS*, the French publication answering to *NOTES AND QUERIES*, as the owner and publisher of the famous *LETTRES À UNE INCONNUE* written by Prosper Mérimée. Mdlle. Dacquin

was a woman of wide culture, and it was a terrible threat held over her by Mérimée that she would one day write a book. But she never did so; she served literature in another way, the way of friendship, which depends also on the pen; only we shall never see her letters which called forth Mérimée's. In this Magazine it was lately pointed out how much the publication of the *LETTRES À UNE INCONNUE* had done for his memory.<sup>1</sup> It had become the fashion in France to regard the subtle critic and fastidious man of letters as a monster without human feelings, a despiser of women, a hater of children, above all, an Anglomaniac and a flatterer at St. Cloud in the last days of the Empire,—traits especially hateful to the French after the downfall. His death had taken place in the midst of the great tragedy. It was scarcely noticed; but the *LETTRES À UNE INCONNUE*, published in 1873, revived an interest in him which is alive at this day.

Mdlle. Dacquin died in last March at 35 Rue Jacob, where she had lived for forty-three years. She was a lover of English literature, the friend of Englishwomen, and, though she wrote no book, it seems possible at this day to find in her character the notes of a true literary life free from that which oftenest mars it, the passion for celebrity. She was born about 1814, the daughter of a country solicitor of high standing at Boulogne, who lost his fortune but preserved an honourable name. If we would believe our fathers, Boulogne sixty years ago was very different from the Boulogne of

<sup>1</sup> PROSPER MÉRIMÉE, November, 1895.

our day, and French society, to which English people were then sometimes admitted in Paris and elsewhere, there presented a tone and a cultivation unknown at this day in provincial towns. However this may be, it is recorded that Mdle. Dacquin was witty, vivacious, and mature at the age of twenty in this society, and that her education was completed with great care. We are not, however, called upon to give Boulogne credit for a culture which Taine afterwards described as "composite," and Mérimée spoke of as "summing up for him more or less a whole civilisation." She had corresponded a year or two with Mérimée when he thus wrote.

M. Dacquin's family consisted of his daughter Jenny, and two sons. One of them died young but full of promise; the other was a distinguished officer in the French army, with whom Jenny lived in close and affectionate relationship till his death, and whose wife and daughter formed her family circle until her own death. After her father's loss of fortune she went to England as companion to Lady M——, and it was from England, about 1831, that she posted her first letter to Mérimée. She had been reading a novel by the rising writer called *UNE CHRONIQUE DU RÈGNE DE CHARLES IX.*, and amused herself by sending her reflections to the author under the name of an English lady, on scented note-paper stamped with a coronet. The reflections were to the point. Mérimée addressed a courteous answer to "Lady A. Seymour" in an English country house. A correspondence followed. We need not ask at what point Mérimée began to discover his favourite form of adventure, a feminine intrigue. All we know is that years passed, and they were still corresponding unknown to each other; but the mask

had long been forgotten'; the reality was something that enchanted him; there was no Lady Seymour, only a French girl with a strange capacity for falling in with his intellectual whim, but who eluded closer knowledge and mystified him in a thousand ways. Only after great difficulty and much persuasion he obtained permission to visit his mysterious correspondent, when on a visit to London in December, 1840. He found a woman with raven hair, a face powerful with vitality if not with beauty, black eyes which we know to have been full of radiance and vivacity, but which he pleased himself at all times by calling *wicked*; a Southerner among Southerners but conforming to the social standards of the Northerners he liked best. Lady M—— received Mérimée in England and remained his friend until her death in 1862. Mdle. Dacquin was the woman he was looking for. He was forty; he had had deep experience of women in society and also of those on whom its doors are shut; all his souvenirs were unsatisfactory except one, as he told Ampère subsequently when they were travelling in Greece, and that was a French girl in England, for whom he picked a flower at Thermopylæ. In her he found the friend, the elective affinity, as he tells her suddenly in after life, in the midst of a discourse on the new crinoline. She was no bluestocking, but she cared for intellectual things with an epicurean appetite perhaps unknown to the bluestocking. The caviare of intercourse with Mérimée was worth more to her than domestic happiness; and this was an all important point to him, who, like Swift in this one respect if not in several others, was in love but did not wish to marry.

The author of *UNE CHRONIQUE DU RÈGNE DE CHARLES IX.* was a figure likely to occupy a woman's imagina-

tion. Under a cold exterior, with the manners of diplomacy (like Lord Clarendon's whom, it was said, Mérimée imitated,) and a reserve of which he carried the secret engraved on a ring, *Remember to beware*, he had sensibilities displayed only to a few, and a strong need for the affection of women, which made him almost pathetic in his lonely life, spent between dim country towns where he was perpetually at work on archæology, and his mother's apartments in Paris, where his cats and a little favourite owl were his solace. Fame came to him amidst revolutions political and literary. He was the enemy of all inflation, a despiser of his own day, a lover of Shakespeare whom he knew as well as he did Aristophanes, Rabelais, and Cervantes; eager for fresh observation in his friends and to see through their eyes, and thus far inconsistent with his motto; but his inconsistencies helped perhaps more than all else to make him the interesting friend that he remained for more than thirty years. From the time of their meeting in London, as Academician, as Senator, as Court favourite, Mérimée never failed Jenny Dacquin.

About 1835 Mdlle. Dacquin was left a very small fortune by a friend. Her father was dead and she was enabled to settle in Paris with her mother. The only restraint that ever seems to fall upon Mérimée's letters is just at this time, when he makes up his mind that after the French fashion she will marry, being now mistress of a dowry, however small. This danger was minimised, however, by comparisons: "Il n'avait pas plus de distinction que mon bonnet de nuit," she said of one of her suitors; and in 1842 Mérimée seems to have met her in Paris every day. Sometimes it was at a box at the opera which he sent her; or it would be an archæological rendezvous in the environs of Paris, during

the time of lilacs or when the chestnut-shells covered the ground. Now began the romance of Mdlle. Dacquin's life, ever associated with the bright days of her first life in Paris. "You may well love Paris," Mérimée wrote to her in calmer years. "Where would you find outside of it such walks, such alleys, such museums as those where we have had so many things to say to each other, and so many tender things?" Correspondence was unremitting between all these meetings, and we have the history of them in notes written before or after the walk, or the pilgrimage to some shrine of antiquity. Her situation at this time was neither more nor less independent than that of an Englishwoman of thirty of our own day living alone with her mother. At the theatre she was accompanied by her brother. In all early years of intercourse it is clear that Mdlle. Dacquin had one plan and Mérimée another. He, as we have said, did not wish to marry: she would take no other view of love than that it led to marriage; but she had gauged the situation from the first and only wished to retain his friendship. Hence came endless reproaches on his part, which ring at times so bitterly that some readers of the Letters may think that Mérimée was sincerely unhappy, and that she was cruel and cold. But he had given her a broad, general rule to go by in one of his letters at the outset of the correspondence: "How is it that the men who are the most indifferent are the most loved?" She had reason to believe that it was so also with the women. It was he himself who had assigned her the part of dry and austere coquetry, which she learned to play with such perfection, and which was so effective in establishing the tender friendship that followed the storm and stress of the early life in Paris; a period which lasted, it must be allowed,



for some ten years. There were times when nothing but walks in the most secluded alleys of the Bois de Boulogne would satisfy Mérimée; at others the statues of the Louvre were the most congenial influence. He was completely without reserve; she erected barriers impenetrable even to the author of *VENUS D'ILLE* and *ARSÈNE GUILLLOT*, who knew everything about women of all ages of the world, and maintained scruples which the disciple of all the Encyclopedists could not break down. He had found his match in cleverness, and, disappointed and cruelly wounded, as he often was, in his sensibilities, she had succeeded in her great aim of becoming necessary to him.

On his election to the Academy in 1854 a ticket for the ladies' gallery formed the subject of several notes, and, as usual after a meeting, reproaches followed. The complaint this time was her having refused to see what he sent her, in full sight of the literary dignitaries, a kiss from the tips of his fingers. Those who remember Jenny Dacquin will not at all agree with M. Filon in his biography of Mérimée that this was the turning-point of her life, and that she must then and there have renounced all idea of sharing the honours that were now falling to Mérimée's name. There is abundant proof that she realised after the first encounters that marriage was no necessity to him, and at the same time that he required devotion in friendship. The sacrifice once made, she was not likely to go back to vain regrets. Close and intimate as were her friendships with women all through this time, no confidant ever received the outpourings of disappointment. Her vigorous individuality was full of independence; she never broke the reserve which was the guarantee for the duration of the intimacy, and it was never discussed in society.

Moreover she had infinite resources apart from him; a wide capacity for friendship, that innate love for intellectual interests of which we have already spoken, a strong taste for travel, for pictures, for music, although she neither played, sang, nor drew. She was not personally ambitious; she never had a salon. Mérimée, who did not believe in the friendship of men when the question of celebrity came in, could feel to the end that in the Rue Jacob his companionship was loved for its own sake, and not as the advertisement of a lady lion-hunter. Her life to its close was consecrated to family affection, and the love of children found its place in it.

To return to that hand-kissing at the Academy which Mdlle. Dacquin would not see; it was no special crisis. Readers of the Letters will remember how imperceptibly came the changes which brought calm into his friendship, and in 1858 we find him writing: "You know that you can command me anything; what is your pleasure?" This was fourteen years after he became an Academician.

"Why did Mérimée not marry Jenny Dacquin?" Only last year his biographer, M. Filon, put this question once more, and answered it in this wise: "Because he was under the power of two women, his mother and Madame——" It is not necessary to ask how much Mdlle. Dacquin knew of Mérimée's past. He was in the meridian of life when she as a girl found herself the recipient of his best wit and friendship. She had a fund of calm and strength in her character with all her southern vivacity, and she was content to ignore much in this world. "Je ne sais que jouer et rêver," is the sentence of hers quoted in the Letters which best represents her. "She had thrown her life into a young girl's venture," writes the sympathetic author of

MÉRIMÉE ET SES AMIS. "She did not withdraw it; she might have consoled herself in marriage; she preferred her liberty and her souvenirs. Literary history owes her a place among the friends of celebrated men. Sometimes bizarre, sometimes stubborn, slightly précieuse, full of wiles, but tender, pure, and at bottom sincere, it is thus that I read her." It is thus she was known to her English friends.

As we read the Letters with all their pretty tenderness and vivid glancing at things fresh, intimate, and simple in the midst of the almost crushing civilisation of Paris, we cannot but be reminded in several points of the journal to Stella. There was the secludedness in Jenny Dacquin's life of which we have spoken, and which imparts its fragrance to the Letters as it does to the Journal. Then she and Mérimée, it may be said, had their "little language" understood by each other. "*Maraquita de mi alma*; I should like to have watched your face as you wrote that sentence in your letter. *Amigo de mi alma*; say that when you want to look agreeable, as our ladies repeat prunes and prism." Sometimes love makes him poetical. "We have had imperial hunts every day," he writes from Fontainebleau; "and the Empress has had picnics on the grass. I am melancholy, and should like to walk with you in the forest and talk of things of fairyland."

Mérimée often drew the portrait of Jenny Dacquin. His father was Léonor Mérimée, a well-known artist, and Prosper is described as living pencil in hand and drawing always as he talked. The slightest sketch from his hand on letters or scraps of paper were treasured by his friends. The walls of Mademoiselle Dacquin's drawing-room were covered with his water-colour landscapes. They showed

no touch of genius, but were correct and elegant sketches, representing very blue seas, Algerian and Italian lines of coast, the superficial finish of 1830. He would have held in horror the realistic school, the école sincère of to-day in painting, though as a writer he had a fastidious realism of his own. He never satisfied himself with his likenesses of Mdlle. Dacquin, which he kept stored in portfolios. Six months after his death, before these or some of his valuable antiquities had been moved from his rooms, the Commune lit its fires in his quarter of Paris, and all he left was burned. It was a fortuitous chance which destined Mérimée's rooms to the same fate as that of the palace of the Empress Eugénie, his lifelong friend.

In the general destruction, change, and neglect which followed France's great cataclysm, we can fancy what a human impulse made Mdlle. Dacquin gather together the letters of thirty-five years and finally decide to publish them in 1873. She had never frittered away her experience in conversation; yet her conscious aim had been fulfilled in having preserved Mérimée's intercourse to the end. She would not let its pleasure die with her, and she committed her secret to the public in one great confidence. The Letters proved Prosper Mérimée to have been a true Frenchman (although he was dressed by an English tailor) participating to the last in the life of France, refusing to the last to believe in her fall. If he had been satirical about his countrymen in their prosperity, and annoyed them by praising everything English, the Letters yielded them much comfort in the shape of satirical criticism on his beloved islanders written from their own country seats. He was known to have been a libertine, of an old-world sort, out of fashion to-day as Voltaire

is out of fashion ; in friendship it was shown his character had been constant and sure. Finally the Letters were full of the charm of antiquarian fantasy, illustrating how Carmen and Colomba and Lokis were drawn from vivid glimpses of civilisations far removed from our own. Mdlle. Dacquin took counsel with Taine : the reply was the dignified memorial preface affixed to the *LETTRES À UNE INCONNUE*.

The wide celebrity of this publication made no change in Mdlle. Dacquin's life. She acknowledged the ownership of the letters which at once identified her with the Unknown ; but she made no sign when imaginary replies to the letters were published, and both French and English readers were mystified and in some cases taken in. In France there is none of that vulgar chase after popular writers which our own countrymen have adopted with so many other inconvenient things from America. It was easy for Mdlle. Dacquin to disregard all but the best and surest way of securing good company,—the way of wit and friendship in intimacy. There was in her character that innate quality which Mérimée called feline, and which is certainly feminine, the love of mystery. This was written in a sensitive face, instinct with the play of life, and felt in her conversation, which, with all its vivacity, was full of reserve. In her drawing-room in the Rue Jacob, surrounded by her water-colour sketches, Algerian souvenirs, and those of many other countries, she looked a complete Southerner, treasuring leisure and remembrance of the sunshine. The black lace falling on her abundant hair and framing a face, never beautiful except for the illuminating

eyes, increased the impression. But the conversation was that of a woman in touch with English minds through our literature (she read four languages), and with the traveller who was compelled as the Celt of old to tell her something new. She delighted in the music of Chopin ; and his pupil Teleffsen, who told stories of his master so well, was among her friends. Another recollection of those old days is of animated talks between Mdlle. Dacquin and an English clergyman, who had married one of her friends. In these discussions Mdlle. Dacquin was a loyal Catholic. There are allusions to this throughout Mérimée's whole correspondence : “votre Père Lacordaire,”—“votre Père Ravignan,”—“vos néo-Catholiques,”—“votre influence là-haut.” It may be said that this faith was of a nature to come between her and Mérimée at one time in their intercourse ; but that it never forbade her friendship or made it necessary for her to judge him by standards which were rules of her own conduct.

The marriage of her niece in 1875 enlarged her family circle. With her and her children Mdlle. Dacquin latterly spent all her summers in the environs of Paris ; but her winters were spent in the capital in the house where she had lived so long and where she died. One of her most precious legacies was of some books, the Letters of Madame de Sévigné in twelve volumes, and an English Shakespeare. These had been safe in her shelves when the flames of the Commune destroyed Mérimée's library ; for he had bequeathed them to Jenny Dacquin in a letter written two hours before his death.

MUSIC HATH CHARMS.<sup>1</sup>

It was the very last place in the world where you would have expected to hear the notes of a church-harmonium ; and the old man who, seated on a reed stool, was playing *God Save the Queen* with one finger, was the very last person whom you would have expected to see performing upon it. But there it stood, quite at home, between the wooden pillars which divided the central living-room from the crowd of latticed closets around it ; and there he sate, quite at home, on the stool, his naked brown legs struggling with the bellows, his brown fingers patting down the keys with a sort of pompous precision. For Punoo was a music-master, and that was his pupil who, with a yawn, was watching his proceedings from the floor while she threaded beads on a string intermittently. That was also the last place from which one would expect any one to take a music-lesson ; but old Punoo being blind was fully persuaded that Bahâni was dutifully at his elbow. This blindness of his was, however, far more to his advantage than his disadvantage as a master. It was, in short, the cause of his being one at all ; since had he had the use of his eyes no mother would have dreamed of employing a man, who was not more than forty-five at the outside, in teaching her girls. As it was, his time was fully taken up in the houses of the clerks, contractors, barristers, and such like, who for some reason or another desired to impart the exotic accomplishment of music to their daughters or wives. But of all these houses Punoo loved the one which contained the harmonium best ; not because of his pupil, since Bahâni, who

was betrothed to a young man who might be seen any day on a Hammer-smith omnibus over on the other side of the world, never learned anything ; but because of the instrument itself. To tell truth it had quite a fine tone, especially when all the wind in its wheezy bellows was sent into one note. And then the playing of it seemed to satisfy him from head to foot. All the other instruments, the accordions and concertinas, even his own fiddle with seven strings of which he was really very fond, only employed his head and his hands ; but this made his whole body as it were to toil and labour after melody. As he sate, with his forehead bedewed with perspiration, the expression on his sightless face, turned upwards all unconscious of the dingy, sordid smoke-blackened rafters which limited his vision, was quite sufficient to make up for the lack of it in the music ; it was the expression of a prisoner who, through the bars of a cage, sees freedom. But the odd little gridiron in the centre of the dark room, which gave it some light and air from the roof above, was scarcely large enough to allow even of Punoo's wizened figure to pass through.

"Lo, it gives one a melting of the liver and a sinking of the heart to hear thee, Master-jee," remarked Mai Kishnu, bustling in with a handful of radishes for the pickle-stew. "Canst not play something more lively, something that goes not wombling up and down like an ill-greased wheel, something with a count in it that gives a body time to catch the beat of it ? For sure I could make better music with my ladle and tray ; better music

<sup>1</sup> Copyright in the United States.

for a bride anyhow ; and mark my word, Bahâni, when thou art really one there shall be none of this boo-hooing and wow-wowling, that might set free thoughts of wolves and God knows what monsters to damage all thy hopes."

" 'Tis not likely, Mai," said Punoo, desisting to speak with great dignity, "that Bahâni will have mastered so much. 'Tis not given to all to play *God Save the Queen* as I do."

"That is good hearing !" ejaculated the house-mother piously. "But the girl gets on, I hope, Master Punoo. Her father writes of it often ; and the instrument, as thou knowest, cost full ten shillings."

In Punoo's account, which he retailed to his other customers, it had cost five times that amount, and he had a spirited description of the auction where Colonels and Deputy-Sahibs and Barrack-Masters had bidden in vain against Bahâni's father Mool Chand, who was municipal clerk in an outlying district. According to Punoo also it had cost five hundred times that amount when the Padre Sahib,—sometimes it was the Lord Padre Sahib (the Bishop),—had sent for it originally from England. There was a further legend, vague and misty even to himself, which he kept holy, as it were, from profane use by locking it away in his own breast, which hinted that the harmonium had been thrown on the market from no desire to get rid of it, but simply from pecuniary necessity ; the Chaplain having been forced into selling his greatest treasure in order to pay a bill for a new one. To tell truth, Punoo's estimate of the harmonium was vague and misty on more points than this. He was, in fact, absolutely ignorant of anything concerning it, save that if you blew persistently at the bellows and pressed the keys it made a noise which somehow or another seemed to

set you free, and yet kept you longing for something more. Punoo knew not for what, having not the slightest idea that he had been born with music in his soul, and that if he had first seen the light in the Western hemisphere instead of the Eastern, he would most likely have been a Wagnerite or some other kind of musical enthusiast.

As it was, to oblige Mai Kishnu, he played *Minnia Punnieya* as quickly as he could, though it was a pain and grief to him to give up the long-drawn notes which sounded so beautiful in *God Save our Gracious Queen*. But Mai Kishnu stirred the pickle-stew to the new rhythm, emphasising it properly with little strokes of the ladle upon the resounding brass pot. Bahâni, she said, must learn that tune against her man's return from being made into a balester (barrister), whereat Bahâni with the utmost decorum giggled and blushed over her beads. She was a pretty, pert girl, who looked upon the future with perfect serenity ; for being married to her first cousin whose widowed mother lived in the house, she knew exactly what the amount of friction between her and her future mother-in-law would be ; and she knew also that she would generally be able to escape quietly, as she did now, from the scene of conflict and leave the two elder women to have it out at full length if they chose. They generally did choose, because they nearly always had an interested audience ; for the quaint rambling old house with its rabbit-warren of tiny rooms opening out to little bits of roof, was full of relations, chiefly women whose husbands were away in Government employ. They each had a separate lodging, as it were, though they were quite as often in some one else's room as in their own, especially when the sound of shrill altercation echoed through the wooden partitions. By



a recognised etiquette, however, all serious disputes were carried on in the well-room where the women bathed. It was more a verandah than a room though the arches were filled up breast-high with a screening wall. But through the hole in the floor, above which the windlass stood, you could not only see right down into the well on the basement story, but also see the people in the street coming for their water. It was when Bahâni was discovered lying flat on the floor so as to crane over and peep into the very street itself, that the fiercest quarrels arose between Mai Kishnu and her widowed sister-in-law. And no quarrel ever ran its course without a reference of some sort to the harmonium, and the iniquity and idiotcy of learning to play tunes as if you were a bad woman in the bazaar. In her heart of hearts Mai Kishnu agreed with this view of the question; but she would sooner have died than confess it, so she invariably carried the war into the enemy's country instead, by insisting on it that Bahâni learned in deference to the oft-expressed desire of her lawful husband, that husband being the complainant's own son. And sometimes, but not often, for she was a faithful defender of the absent municipal clerk, she would clinch the matter by telling her sister-in-law that if there was iniquity or idiotcy about, her brother was also to blame. Whereupon Râdha, who, being the widow of an elder brother, really was in a way the head of the house, would retort that in that case it was all the more necessary for the women-folk of the family to remember that the salvation of souls lay with them; so she would beg to remind all present that this being a dark Saturday or a light Friday with some particular event in prospect, or some particular event in the past, it behoved no

pious women of that family to eat, say radishes, on that day. Now, when you have just spent much time and skill in the preparing of pickle for a large household, it is aggravating to be told that it is an impious diet. Still there was always the obvious retort that on such days widows ate nothing at all. So then Râdha, with pharisaical acquiescence, would retire to her own little bit of a room, with her husband's photograph (he had been a clerk also) hung between two German prints of the Madonna and Herodias' daughter (which did duty respectively for the infant Krishna and Durga Devi slaying the demons), and begin counting her beads with a clatter, and repeating her texts in an aggressively loud voice; while Mai Kishnu, after sending the pickle-stew of radishes down in the window-basket as an alms to the first beggar in the street, would begin to cook something else; something as nasty as her deft hands could make it, since this, oddly enough, relieved her feelings.

But Punoo would go on playing *God Save our Gracious Queen* on the old harmonium with perfect serenity, all unconscious of the fact that two women were cursing it in their hearts as a malevolent demon bent on ruining the household. It was a quaint household when all was said and done, this colony of women, whose husbands were for the most part away serving the Government in remote stations. Quaintest of all it was, perhaps, when in the afternoon the boys belonging to it (and there were many, thank heaven! despite the demon) came home from school; embryo clerks full of classes and examinations, yet with a word or two for crickets and a desire for pickled radishes on every day in the calendar.

"Ask your Aunt Râdha," Mai Kishnu would say shortly to their remonstrances over the nasty substitute for the delicacy. "'Twas she

forced me into giving your stomachs-ful of my best pickles to some dirty beast of a beggar in the street. God forgive me if he was a holy man, but he may have been a Mohammedan for all I know, and what good will that do to my soul?"

But despite the crickets and the examinations, despite the vague leavening of Western free thought, the boys fought shy of their Aunt Râdha, perhaps from the veil of uncertainty which their education was necessarily throwing over all things. There were so many ideas, and one must be right; it might be this one. In a way they were more afraid of her and her views than Mai Kishnu, who never doubted at all. But then Mai Kishnu knew that she could always have the upper hand over her sister-in-law in the matter of cold baths in the winter mornings; for Râdha thought twice about interfering with the beams in other folks' eyes when that mote of her own about warm water for religious ablutions was ready to her adversary's hand.

The boys, however, though they ate the nasty substitute for pickles without more ado, were not so biddable in the matter of *God Save the Queen*. As they sate on the dark flight of steps between the living-room and the well-verandah they used to pipe away at it in English in the oddest falsetto. And Bahâni, who was a bit of a tom-boy, would imitate them, and then go into fits of shrill laughter at her own gibberish.

Altogether it was a very quaint household, and it was a very quaint noise indeed which went up to high heaven from it; the boys' voices, Bahâni's mocking laugh, Râdha's muttered texts, Mai Kishnu's vexed clattering of her ladles and pots, and blind Punoo's perspiring efforts after melody on the old harmonium. For he never attempted harmony; that

was beyond his self-taught execution altogether. But the sense of it was there, showing itself in sheer delight at pulling out all the stops that still existed, and blowing away until he could no more from sheer exhaustion.

So the years had passed contentedly enough for every one; especially for the old music-master who every day went away with the unleavened cake which was his only fee, knowing that even such payment was in excess of his desires, since it was enough for him to have the honour and glory of playing on the harmonium, and of boasting about his proficiency on that instrument to his other pupils who were forced to be content with an accordion or some such ignoble instrument.

And then one day the funny, old rambling house was in a perfect ferment of preparation, and even Râdha's face was beaming; for her son was coming home. He was coming from the Hammersmith omnibus and the boarding-house in Notting Hill, coming from the rush and roar of London to take up the threads of life again in the dark latticed rooms where Mai Kishnu made pickles and his mother said her prayers; above all where Bahâni waited for him, all dyed with turmeric and henna, and clothed in tinselled garments. The little household temple up on the roof, where there were more German prints doing duty as various gods and goddesses, had scarcely an instant's respite from the multitudinous rituals; and if there was a minute or two to spare, the women downstairs were sure to remember something else which if left undone would bring the most direful misfortune on the young couple. There was no quarrelling now, only a babel of shrill kindly voices. And there was no music, save of a kind to which Mai Kishnu could clatter her ladles and pans; drubbings of drums and

endless tinklings of sutaras ; for the good lady had set her foot down as regards the harmonium, even to the extent of showing off Bahâni's accomplishment. Accomplishment forsooth ! What need was there of such fools' talk between a newly-met young couple ? And though Gunesha had come back from the other side of the world dressed like a real sahib, that did not prevent his being a young man, and knowing a pretty bride when he saw one. So, thank heaven ! there they were at last, in the pleasant cool upper room on the roof, which had been all newly whitewashed and painted and strewn with flowers for the auspicious occasion, looking into each other's eyes as young people should. It was all so proper, so touching, so infinitely satisfactory, that for once Kishnu and Râdha fell on each other's necks and wept tears of sympathy.

But Punoo wandered in and out as a privileged guest among the merry-making and the bustle, sidling up to his closed treasure, feeling it all over in sightless fashion, and longing for the time when he should be called upon, as the bride's master, to display her accomplishment ; for by this time she could play *Minnia Punniya* and a few other tunes quite correctly. But the days passed, and those two on the roof, despite music and culture, despite all the sciences and all the ologies, were quite content with those things which had contented their fathers and mothers before them. It was not so with old Punoo. Even his fiddle afforded him no comfort ; and though his other pupils' accordions and concertinas gave him the correct musical intervals which his ear approved instinctively, but which his hand was too unpractised to reproduce with the accuracy which satisfied him, they were poor substitutes for that splendid tone which was born of vehement

pumping and perspiration. Perhaps it was really the latter he craved ; that feeling of labouring body and soul to give expression to something within him.

Even billing and cooing like a couple of pigeons on the roof, however, must come to an end, and after some three weeks of it, the barrister one day discovered that there was a harmonium in the dark arches of the living-room. He was beginning by this time to think that he had perhaps drifted a little too far back into the old life, and that as he had every intention, when this first very natural and inevitable relapse was over, of setting up house on more civilised lines, it might be as well to show off his new habits a little, and so emphasise the difference which he meant to draw between his life and the life led in the quaint old ancestral house. So without more ado, without any asking of how it came there, or who played on it, he whisked his coat-tails (for he had resumed European dress on his descent from the roof) over the music-stool with the consummate air of a performer, and set his feet to the pedals and his hands to the keys.

"What a wheezy old thing !" he cried, when a sort of agonised moo as from a sick cow came in response. Bahâni, standing decorously in the shadow with her veil down in most alluring bashfulness, tittered, and old Punoo, who had stood still in sheer surprise, moved forward with a superior smile.

The barrister heard and saw, and a frown came to his self-satisfied face. "The bellows are leaking," he cried again ; "but never mind, it shall do something ; I'll make it !"

Something indeed ! The women giggled and stopped their ears, but old Punoo stood transfixed, a great pain, a great joy coming to his sight-

less face. Was that the harmonium? Was that *God Save the Queen*, that pæan of melody and harmony together, coming in great waves of sound and bearing him away, further and further and further into some unknown land that was yet a Land of Promise? And all these years he had lived in ignorance; he had boasted, he had said that he could play it, his priceless treasure! Priceless! ay, he had been right there. Listen to it! Was it not priceless? A sort of passion of pride surged up in him overpowering all thought of himself.

Then there was a loud crack, a wheeze, a sudden silence; and the barrister stood up wiping his forehead, for he had worked hard. "That has done for the old thing," he said with a laugh; "but it was past work anyhow, and I prefer a piano any day of the week. Don't stand in the corner, Bahâni. You must learn to behave like an English lady now, and there

is nothing to be ashamed of in your husband, I assure you."

Mai Kishnu and Râdha looked at each other as if for support, and the vague affright and sheer surprise of their faces made them once more sympathetic. "It is a new world, sister," whispered the one to the other as they moved off respectively to their prayers and their pickles, leaving the barrister making love to his bride over the prospect of the piano he was going to give her.

But Punoo moved softly, blindly, over to his old seat and set his feet to the pedals and his fingers to the keys. But no sounds came from them, not even that poor travesty of *God Save the Queen* which had once filled him with pride. And as he sat fingering the dumb keys idly, a dim content that it should be so came into the old musician's soul. The swan-song had been beautiful, but it had been a song of death. He, after all, had known the harmonium best.

## A VIRGINIAN SPORTSMAN.

NOBODY ever quite knew what the Captain took his rank from, though that was a trifle in Virginia. It was said that at some remote period before the war he had navigated a batteau on the rapid waters of the Staunton river, and had carried tobacco and grain for the planters in days when railways were distant and high roads, as now, the worst in the Anglo-Saxon world. So though an expert only in the handling of a punt-pole the Captain may be said in a sense to have been a member of the mercantile marine of his country. He had never in truth set eyes upon the ocean, nor had any desire that way; nor did he come of a people that were much given to going down to the sea in ships. In fact he would often tell us that he "had no use for so much water."

Four main roads met in front of the Captain's door, a circumstance which suited exactly his gregarious temperament. And they were roads indeed; roads such as only a Virginian would have faced upon wheels, or even calmly contemplated day after day as the Captain from the security of his front porch contemplated them. One of these red rutty tracks came toiling up from regions to the eastward wholly given over and sacred to tobacco; and if you had followed it on towards the sunset, and had not broken your neck or disappeared in a mud-hole, you would have found yourself eventually within sight of the Blue Ridge faintly outlined against the distant sky. The other came from counties lying to the northward that had seen much better

days, and after passing the Captain's house shot off in a straight line regardless of obstacles for the frontier of North Carolina which was barely a dozen miles away. In fact the Captain, who was born just here at the forks of the old Bethel and Shuckburgh pikes, had, as you may say, a narrow escape of being born a North Carolinian, and that would not have done at all. For everybody, in Virginia at any rate, knows that when a North Carolinian boasts of hailing from the Old North State he takes very good care to add if he can conscientiously do so, "but right close on the Virginia line." It is ill guessing what the Captain would have done if he had been born a North Carolinian, for he was a most ardent patriot, and a patriot in Virginia in those days meant a patriotic Virginian,—which is a highly intelligible sentiment. It is possible that the bosom of a North Carolinian may also swell at the thought of his mother State; but the sentiment would be one that a dispassionate observer would find no small difficulty in sympathising with.

The Captain had a strange domicile; he lived in the shell of an old coaching inn, and a very famous hostelry it had been in its day. First, however, came the railroads, and then the war with its chaotic ruin finally extinguished every spark of its ancient glory. For twenty years it had been slowly rotting, plank by plank, shingle by shingle. The Captain, however, reckoned it would last his time and would hardly anticipate nature by falling in upon him bodily. A rough board at the



corner of the fence carried an inscription, rudely traced in lamp black, to the effect that the weary traveller could still get accommodation for man and horse ; while upon the next panel was inscribed in still larger letters the much less hospitable notification, *No hunting or fishing here*. Such, it may be remarked, was the local and legal fashion of proclaiming that the proprietor was a game preserver ; but of this anon.

As for the house, it was a rambling and now crazy edifice of wood from which every vestige of paint had long since faded. The main central portion still stood fairly upright, but the two wings lurched away on either side as if threatening to part company altogether with the parent stem. Long galleries ran around the outside of the queer structure both in the upper and lower stories, and helped, no doubt, to bind it together and prolong its precarious existence. Moss had taken hold of the twisting shingles of the roof. The tin gutter-pipes had shaken loose, and swung in strips from the eaves. There was hardly a pane of glass in the whole building except in the two or three rooms occupied by the Captain and his rare guests ; and even there strips of the local newspaper did duty for many a vanished pane. Such of the Venetian shutters as survived swung loose, often upon only a single hinge, and with the dangling gutter-pipes made such an uproar on a windy night, that an abode which was ghostly enough by day was truly terrifying in a midnight storm. The Captain, however, cared for none of these things. The decay amidst which he lived never caused him, we will venture to say, even a passing pang. The very extent of the dilapidations paralysed perhaps any feeble spark of energy he may have possessed ; and he lived as jollily as the proverbial sandboy amid his ruins. For there

were rows of barns and stables in the oak grove behind the house, some of which had collapsed, the logs lying in a heap as they had fallen, while others leaned over at an angle that would have been impossible but for the heavy props that the Captain and his negroes had been absolutely forced to put up in self-defence. And this was necessary, for besides the pair of mules the estate still boasted of, an occasional traveller of the humbler kind from time to time sought the hospitality of the dilapidated tavern. The Captain, like every good Virginian, was greatly given to reminiscences, and his favourite theme was the animated splendour of the Plummer House in the old days when his father owned it. A somewhat notable rendezvous it had, in truth, once been, as was natural, seeing that it stood in the angle where the old highway from the Carolinas to the North crossed the route along which the planters from the regions lying eastwards used to travel in some rustic state towards the fashionable spas in the Virginia Mountains. Family coaches, dragged through the dust or mud by sleek horses and piloted by negro coachmen, were almost daily visitors in those halcyon times throughout the summer season ; while gay young dandies on well-bred nags rode in and out of the shady yard by the score, drank juleps on the verandah, or flirted and danced in the now lonely rooms with the fair members of First Families who happened to be at that stage of their annual pilgrimage to the healing waters of the Alleghany Valleys. Never, perhaps, has highway tavern had a greater fall. The tobacco-waggon, plunging and crashing onwards to the still distant market-town, is nowadays almost the only vehicle that ever pulls up before the deserted inn, and even the waggon-drivers in these hard times bring usually their own rations and camp,

if benighted, on the patch of turf under the old chestnut tree at the cross roads. Still the Captain, who is gregarious and has long outlived financial ambition, gets some satisfaction, at any rate, out of their society. And sometimes a casual horseman, unduly reckless of his pocket and still more regardless of his inner man, would stay and face that nightmare of fat pork, soda-biscuit, and black coffee which the Captain's wife provided in exchange for a twenty-five cent piece.

Though the Captain would have registered himself as a hotel-keeper, as a matter of fact he was first and chiefly a turkey-hunter, and to support this inexpensive profession he owned, fortunately, about two hundred acres of land. Though the latter were perhaps as poor as any two hundred acres in Virginia, which is saying much indeed, the Captain's wants were so few and slight that when he had paid his taxes (amounting perhaps to some fifteen dollars), dull care may be said to have been wholly lifted from the establishment till the next visit of the tax-gatherer. The farm was cultivated in irregular and spasmodic fashion by a couple of negroes who worked it on shares, using the Captain's mules and giving their landlord half the tobacco, two-thirds of the corn, and three-fourths of the wheat and oats. In a dry year the whole lot of it could, we think, have been put into a waggon and drawn to market by a pair of stout horses even over the Shuckburgh pike. Only a portion of the estate would any longer produce even such skeleton crops as the Captain's negroes raised. The rest lay sick unto death with a sterility such as in any other countries known to man would be absolutely inconceivable where soil existed at all. Scrub pines and briars and sassafras and broomsedge had covered the corpse of most of the Captain's property in their not un-

kindly grasp; and for the rest it was a moot question whether they or the homestead would give out first. Even Uncle Moses and Jake Plummer (Jake had belonged in the days of slavery to the Captain) had begun to complain, and think that the residential advantages of their master's property were almost too dearly purchased. But the Captain troubled himself little about such things. For him the year had two seasons only; the one when it was possible to shoot, and the other when it was not. In the former few men were more active; during the latter, including of course the spring and summer, none probably ever took their ease with more unswerving deliberation. For every morning after breakfast, when it was not raining, the Captain carried his chair down from the rickety porch and set it against the rough trunk of a shady acacia tree, and as the shadow moved round with the sun the Captain moved his chair round with it. So that while the morning found him with his eye upon the lower road, the evening found that watchful orb surveying the approach from the Piedmont country. This was not so much for possible customers, who might or might not share the Captain's midday meal, for that great man was not in the least degree mercenary, but for such as might haply prove sociable and responsive to his urgent appeal to "get down and chat him some."

The Captain's notice that his place was forbidden to casual gunners has been alluded to. It may seem strange that such an ardent sportsman, who hunted the entire country for some miles round, should have been so churlish about his own little domain of two hundred acres. But the danger-signal on the fence was not hoisted for the benefit of the Captain's neighbours, who were rarely sportsmen, being small farmers mostly with large

farms (if the seeming paradox be admissible), but against that type of humanity which our friend designated as "them city fellahs," and for whom he was accustomed with great warmth and frequency to declare he had "no manner of use." In former days the few gentry who lived in that neighbourhood had been wont to shoot partridges and rabbits in friendly unchallenged fashion over each other's and their humbler neighbours' land; but since the great upheaval social centres had wholly changed. What wealth and leisure existed was now in the towns, and it was from there that the gunners chiefly came. "Gawd knows who they are," the Captain used to say, as he sent a charge of tobacco juice at a sitting grasshopper, "or whar they come from, a-whirlin' over the country as if it belonged to 'em with ther brichloaders and neepaty, napity<sup>1</sup> dawgs, and fancy coats, and pants, and fixins. No, surr, I reckon no city chap'll fire a gun off for a right smart ways up and down this yer pike. I've fixed that, anyway." And so he had, for the danger-signal was upon every farm, though not against the Captain, for five miles round. Not being a "city fellah," we had no cause ourselves to complain of this; and indeed we often shot with the Captain's party, though never, if it could possibly be helped, upon the same beat with that great man himself, for he was not a pleasant companion after the partridges ("bird hunt'n," he would have called it), nor were his dogs shining examples to a young and heady setter in whose future you might feel an interest. He regarded you on such occasions rather as an opponent than a partner; and his great object was to bring down

<sup>1</sup> This was, we believe, an entirely original phrase of the Captain's, inspired by an occasional glimpse of the dainty, well-groomed Laverack setters that had been recently introduced into the country.

every bird wherever it might happen to rise, before you could pull on it, and so being in a position to boast of what he called "beating the crowd" when the game was counted out at the end of the day. As the Captain was only a very moderate performer at this work it resulted in his eye being wiped not seldom; and this he took so very much to heart that it was almost as distracting (for we had a great personal regard for the Captain) as having him cut down your birds as they rose in front of you or even upon your off side. We can see him now, in his big straw hat and flapping tail-coat, bustling up to the setting dog with elbows out, his gun at the ready, and an almost fierce expression of rivalry in his eye and general demeanour. His dogs would certainly not have been accused of being "neepaty, napity," for they were lumbering, poking brutes nearly as big as donkeys, with much more in telligence and nose than speed, till you unhaply knocked over a bird within range of their immediate vision, when they were fast enough in all conscience, and you would be fortunate indeed if you got there in time to save a wing-feather. The Captain had a gun, too, that was something worse than a curiosity. It may be unnecessary, perhaps, to remark that it was a muzzle-loader, but its ancient stock was a masterpiece of splicing and riveting; the barrels were worn as thin as a sixpence, and though they had so far withstood the Captain's "loads," as he called them, the nipples were accustomed upon occasions to blow off with a great sound, burying themselves in tree trunks or vanishing into space. This seemed in no way to disconcert the Captain himself; but it made his friends feel that it was almost as dangerous to be behind as in front of him. It was for every reason a

good thing, when you arranged a day over the Captain's preserves, to make up a party of four, taking your own friend and your own dogs over one line of country, while the Captain and some third party, who either did not know him or was used to him, took another. And the spirit of rivalry was always strong enough to make this eminent sportsman accede most readily to such a plan. For not only was his method of shooting irksome and his gun dangerous in a mechanical sense, but his principles as regards safety of firing were hopelessly distorted. These latter, we recollect, were illustrated most forcibly upon a rather unfortunate occasion. A Canadian sportsman of some repute had come down to the district for the best fortnight of the partridge-shooting, and we had included in our programme a day over the Captain's preserves. A party of four was as usual arranged, and it was easily contrived that we should separate, ourselves with the Canadian taking one beat and the Captain with his friend taking the other. We had a big stubble field, however, to traverse upon this occasion before the company separated, and in it a covey of birds was flushed wild, owing to the jealousies of our various dogs. Beyond the Captain at the extreme right of our line was his friend (not ours, thank goodness), and he had taken advantage of the brief halt to put his foot up on a fence, his back being towards us, for the purpose of adjusting a boot-lace. A lagging bird in the meantime rose before the Captain, and swinging to the right flew straight for the gentleman in question, who being about seventy to eighty yards off, neither saw nor heard it. The Captain, however, levelled his cannon with the greatest deliberation and fired. Down came the bird, and up sprang his friend with imprecations loud and deep, it is true, but

not a whit too strong for the occasion, for he had received most of the half-spent charge in his person. "It's all right, squire" (the victim was a magistrate), sung out the Captain cheerily as he began calmly re-loading his gun; "I saw you had your back turned towards me." It was fortunate for all parties that our paths here diverged. The story is, we believe, still told in Canada as an illustration of what to expect at a Virginian shooting-party.

It was at turkey-hunting, however, that the Captain really shone. At game-shooting he was a zealous but, as will probably be understood, a not very satisfactory performer; but at turkeys he was really great. The wild turkey, that noblest of woodland birds and wariest of feathered fowl, shows over a large part of Virginia few signs of extinction. So long indeed as the tall primeval forests, dense pine woods, and abandoned fields cover so large a portion of the country as they now do, the turkey will successfully defy the efforts of the few hunters who are sufficiently skilled in the art to menace his existence. For the Captain's friend, the city fellah, would never cause a single feather of that proud bird's to tremble; while as for the average sportsman, who has anything to do at all besides shoot, life is generally voted too short for a pursuit that consists wholly of woodcraft, contains so many certain blanks, and in which marksmanship plays so small a part. But for the Captain life was not too short for what was in fact its principal object. Partridge-shooting was only a secondary matter with him, as he, indeed, was in that art but a secondary performer.

It was when the first sharp frosts of October had fired the woods with the gorgeous splendour of decay that the Captain began to stir himself after his long siesta, and fetch down from

over the mantel-shelf not only the double-barrelled fowling-piece already noticed, but the long Kentucky rifle that had belonged to his father and that he still used for squirrels and, upon certain occasions, for the noble turkey himself. His crops were housed, such as they were : his tobacco was being "fired" in the barn, such as it was, and coming out all the colours of the rainbow ; and Jake and Uncle Moses for the fifth or sixth year in succession were vowing that they would quit farming. And it was at this season that the young broods of turkeys, who roamed the woodlands or picked their way stealthily through the rushy fields, became lawful prey under the game-laws of Virginia to those who, in the local vernacular, could succeed in "catching up with them." These flocks, or gangs, numbered as a rule from eight to fourteen birds, and by this time had grown to be nearly the size of the highly educated old veterans, their parents, who watched over their wanderings. In every great stretch of woodland, or where continuous belts of timber touched or almost touched each other, there one brood at least would be found ranging, always within certain more or less definite limits. Wherever, too, a mountain spur threw its wooded crest a few hundred feet above the low ground, it would be almost certainly frequented by a brood of the stately timorous birds.

The Captain had by instinct and experience a very accurate notion each season where to find the various gangs. But in addition to this, not a farmer, nor even a negro, passed along the high road in August and September who was not ready to place the results of his local observations at the service of the "popular landlord of the Plummer House" as the county papers, when in a serio-comic vein,

were accustomed to speak of our friend. For ourselves, though we made a point of having two or three excursions of this kind every year with the Captain, we could not boast of having even the most elementary proficiency in the art. Life, as we have said, seemed too short, and such measure of skill as we possessed in stopping the rapid twisting partridge of Virginia would have been entirely thrown away in hunting the turkey. For when that noble bird could be induced to present you with a shot, it was usually a sitting one ; and even when otherwise, the old familiar metaphor of a flying haystack was in such case almost literally applicable. But the essence of the mystery lay in securing the shot ; and we are free to confess that, save when under the wing of the Captain and the shadow of his blunderbuss, the elusive tactics of the king of forest-birds were too many for us.

The chief and vital accomplishment, without which you could not hope to be a turkey-hunter at all, was that of imitating the call of the wily keen-eared bird. This sounds simple enough ; but as a matter of fact it was about as difficult, or seemed to us so, as learning the violin, and not nearly so useful for general purposes. The implement used for this nice deception was usually the wing-bone of the turkey itself, which seems surely the very refinement of guile. It was by no means difficult with a little practice to imitate the *tuk ! tuk !* of your intended victim entirely to your own satisfaction, and to that perhaps of some inexperienced friends ; but if you could not convince the turkey to an absolute certainty that you were one of his relatives, or should he suspect for a moment that there was treachery in the note, you might just as well, so far as getting a shot was concerned, have fired off both barrels at once into the air ; even



better, for sometimes a great alarm, such as the rush of a barking dog towards a flock, will act upon it in a paralysing or stupefying fashion. Indeed, many turkey-hunters, the Captain included, kept a small dog trained to run in and bark after the shot for the purpose of scattering the birds. The Captain's "tuckey-dawg," as he called it, was a singular looking animal, being what was generally known in Virginia as a "fyce," and the term, which, we think, is Elizabethan English, was applied in the South to every species of small dog indiscriminately. The Captain's fyce was of a yellow shade, with the head of a fox, the curly tail of a squirrel, and the legs of a turnspit. He would, in short, have been locally described as "a bench-legged fyce." His chief mission was to tree squirrels, and to bark up the trunk till the Captain with his long small-bore Kentucky rifle arrived upon the scene. For this great sportsman took sometimes what he called "a spell of squ'rl hunt'n'," the large gray squirrel being a popular luxury on the tables of the Virginia country folk.

We used to start generally about sunrise on those glorious autumn mornings. So far as our own feelings were concerned there was none of the gravity and responsibility of a campaign against the partridges. We were out to enjoy ourselves in an irresponsible fashion, to revel in the gorgeous colouring of the woodlands, to drink in the fresh, balmy, resinous air of early autumn, and take any bit of luck that came with thankfulness. But the Captain, we need not say, was very serious indeed on such occasions. We can see him now climbing stealthily up the broken surface of the rudely cultivated or abandoned fields that stretched up to the edge of the forests clothing the ridge and summit of the mountain,

his keen and experienced eye searching everywhere for some faint print on the red clay or black loam that tells of the recent wanderings of the gang and the direction in which their footsteps have been bent. It is not, however, till we enter the forest above the highest line of cultivation that the time arrives for absolute silence and the extremity of caution. There is up here little underbrush or covert in which birds might be taken unawares, for the tall gray trunks of chestnut, oak, and poplar shoot up from a smooth carpet of dead leaves, while far above our heads, broken here and there with patches of bright blue sky, hangs the now motionless canopy of leaves, one gorgeous blaze of scarlet and gold. Slowly and cautiously, about a hundred yards apart, we steal along between the tree-trunks, up the long ridge of the mountain which, dipping slightly here and there in its ascent, gives a possible chance of coming unawares upon the turkeys in some hollow or beneath some ridge. The Captain has his celebrated gun loaded with heaven knows what, for to-day he carries his shot in a medicine-bottle and his powder in a mustard-tin, the well-worn flasks, as very often happens, being laid up for repairs; and the fyce dog, with its bushy tail curled over its back, prowls along behind him.

We are already very high up in the world, and the silence of the Indian summer in these lofty forests is intense. The bark of a squirrel, or the hoarse call of a crow, seems to make the whole air tremble. Far away below us lies the many-coloured rolling plain of old Virginia, basking in the sun with its red fallows and now golden forests and dark splashes of pine wood. The white gleam of a homestead shows here and there, while a score of

scattered smoke-wreaths mark the site of tobacco-barns where the newly-gathered leaves are slowly curing. A faint gray outline rolls along the western horizon ; it is the Blue Ridge, the first outwork of the Alleghanies. The song of a ploughman, the bark of a dog, the thud of an axe come up faintly from far below us ; but where we are walking the mere snapping of a twig makes a noise like a pistol, and has at all hazards to be avoided if we would hope to keep on good terms with the Captain and catch, perchance, the wary turkey napping below yonder ridge. There is little other game or even bird-life in these silent altitudes. The woodpecker taps as if he revelled in the noise he made ; the gray squirrel, safe to-day at any rate from the Captain, leaps from tree to tree or scuttles up the hoary trunks ; Brer Rabbit (for this, it must be remembered, is the land of Uncle Remus) is much too sociable to mount so high above civilisation, though his old friend, the fox, now and again on these occasions steals across one's vision. It is just possible too that a brood of ruffed grouse, rare though the bird is east of the Alleghanies, and almost as shy as the turkey itself, might haunt these wooded hill-tops. But should one of these grand birds, by some strange freak, get up under the very muzzle of your gun, refrain, as you value the Captain's alliance, from yielding to temptation ; for so far as turkeys are concerned, a shot in these silent, echoing woods would most certainly ruin everything for the day, or at least for the morning. It is well too to keep an eye upon the leaves over which you are carefully treading. For the Captain at any rate would notice in a moment the slightest disturbance of their surface, and can tell at once whether it is the work of turkeys, and almost

estimate the length of time it is since they were scratching among them.

Suddenly from just beyond the ridge, a hundred yards or so to the left, a sound like an explosion of dynamite seems to shake the whole mountain. The Captain has fired off his gun, and he never fires at anything less than a turkey on these occasions. A hasty flank movement of a few yards brings us in view of the situation, and a sound as of heavy wings flapping follows the concussion of the shot. The fyce dog, with tail well curled over his back, is charging along and yelping in a state of great excitement. The Captain is reloading his piece from the medicine-bottle and the mustard-tin, with a sheet of the county paper for wadding ; it is perhaps needless to remark that his left barrel remains at full cock during the operation.

The whole gang have risen, it appears, at long range from behind some old panels of a boundary fence. The Captain fired, it seems, with a view to scatter the birds, though he declares he crippled one. It may be added that he has never yet been known to admit missing anything clean ; and indeed, "the Captain's cripples" have passed as an expression into the local phraseology.

And now comes the really serious part of the whole day's proceedings. The birds are thought to have been at any rate partially scattered, thanks to the noisy efforts of the bench-legged fyce well supported by the Captain's artillery, and also to the fact of their having been taken unawares. It now only remains to select a favourable position upon the ridge where we can both shelter ourselves from view and at the same time command all the likely approaches. A great chestnut trunk, fallen prone and dead these three or four years, favours our design

and offers an excellent ambuscade ; sitting down behind it we possess our souls in patience for a time and discuss the situation in a low tone. Then in the fulness of time the Captain prepares to play upon his little pipe, and with lips compressed and cheeks distended the performance commences. *Tuk, tuk, tuk, tuktuk !* But the only answer comes from some solitary hoarse-voiced crow, or the *rat-tat-tat* of a woodpecker ; and in the pauses between the Captain's efforts the silence is only broken by the dropping of acorns and chestnuts round us or the light scrape of a squirrel on the leaves. It may be a long time before our companion's industrious and careful piping is rewarded, or it may indeed be, as the song says, for ever. In this case, however, response comes at last to proclaim that one, at any rate, of the scattered birds is moving on the slope of the mountain below us.

Now the exciting period begins ; we cease to speak even in whispers ; the fyce dog lies low and, cocking his short ears, watches wistfully the rugged hairy face of his master, which is certainly something of a study, as he holds treacherous converse with his unsuspecting victim. These, as may be imagined, are far the most serious moments of the Captain's life. A false note might mean ruin, and it is evident from the answers that another bird has now joined the first one ; we no longer dare show our noses even above the log, and can judge of the bird's approach only by their answering notes. In ten minutes or so the *tuk, tuk*, gets very near ; the birds must be almost within shot. The Captain's veins fairly swell, and the perspiration stands out on his forehead with the responsibility of piping correctly at so short a distance. We

can now hear their feet actually treading on the dry leaves, and it occurs to us how disastrous were a sneeze at this moment. The turkeys are now beyond a doubt within easy shot. The Captain is to give the signal for action, and he grasps firmly his big gun, with five drachms of powder in each barrel if there's a grain this time, we'll warrant. It is not a pleasant gun to be at close quarters with, and for our own part we do not like it. "Now !" says the chief, and at the word we both spring into a kneeling position above the log. A couple of big gobblers fill our horizon. They have just time to lift their heavy wings. The Captain does not take our bird this time : it is too serious an occasion ; and we fire simultaneously.

We have a feeling that the drum of our ear is broken, and our head sings like a tea-kettle. A cloud of smoke hangs like a pall over everything for a second or two, for the Captain not only uses black powder in such large doses, but buys it at the country store. Both birds are dead of course ; nothing but the equivalent of "buck fever," and we are neither of us likely to suffer from that, could produce any other result. The Captain has fallen back on his elbow for the moment ; most people would be flat on their back from such a shock. "Dorgonne it, that ar blamed nipple has blowed off again !" And so it had. Still no one is hurt, except the turkeys, and we go home rejoicing under the weight of our somewhat heavy spoils ; while we seriously turn over in our mind whether it would not be worth while for the Captain's friends to raise a fund among themselves for providing him with a gun that would stand his "loads," and be less of a trial to his shooting-partners.

## SIR JOHN HAWKWOOD.

THE mercenary fighting-man is a person who seldom receives his due reward during his lifetime or his just meed of fame after his death. The character is one so alien to the age in which we live, it belongs so entirely to the days when fighting was the only occupation for a gentleman, that it has forfeited alike our study and our sympathy. Volunteers we understand, but mercenaries we do not. The world apparently has grown to think that fighting as a profession,—the bare trade of arms unconsecrated by any sentiment of cause or country—is not a noble thing, and should not, however ably and gallantly followed, be adjudged the highest praise.

Possibly the world is right; but we suspect that change of system in the training of fighting men has had far more influence than mere abstract humanity in creating this opinion. In these days of short service and swift wars the old type of professional fighting man has become extinct. In every country the recruit is forced through a soldier's education at high pressure, and returned to civil life as speedily as possible, that he may earn money to pay for the education of others. No man, unless he be an officer, devotes his whole lifetime to the military calling, and consequently the few mercenaries (the name is too ignoble for them) who are known to us in these later times are without exception officers, Gordon, for instance, Valentine Baker, and Hobart. It was not so of old, when the rule was once a soldier always a soldier, and the only school was war. Then few men dreamed of rising to command

except through the ranks, and many gentlemen preferred to stay all their lives in the ranks, or at highest to carry the ensigns of their companies. Veteran soldiers were worth their weight in gold, and though by no means innocent of rapacity, followed their calling from sheer devotion to it, and thought themselves unlucky if they died in their beds.

But the world is wrong in its neglect of mercenaries,—wrong because they have played a far larger part in the world's history than is ever ascribed to them. One famous corps is indeed remembered; the Ten Thousand that marched to Cunaxa with Cyrus and back again with Xenophon. Few mercenaries exercised a much smaller influence on history than these, but then they had the good fortune to have a great historian among them. Yet what a change had there been in the history of Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but for the thousands of English and Scotch mercenaries who fought under Maurice of Nassau and Gustavus Adolphus; what a change in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries without the Swiss, the Landsknechts, and the Reiters; what a change in the fourteenth without the English who served with John Hawkwood! But these mercenaries had no Xenophon to turn their actions into living history and hence they are but ill remembered. The greatest general of the fourteenth century was an Englishman whose name is unfamiliar to most Englishmen; if we can recall him to remembrance for a fugitive month we shall have done good work.

It is but vague information that we can gather as to John Hawkwood's youth. He was born in the reign of King Edward the Second, about the year 1320, at Sybil Hedingham in Essex; the second son of one Gilbert Hawkwood, a tanner. He inherited at his father's death twenty pounds and a hundred shillings (*solidi*), and sought his fortune, as became a spirited young gentleman, in the French wars. It is tolerably certain that he fought both at Crécy and Poitiers, and that he was one of the many Englishmen who, when the peace of Brétigny threw them out of legitimate employment, resolved to carry on war on their own account, and organised themselves into companies for that purpose. He must have distinguished himself early, for from the first he appears to have been elected to command the company to which he belonged. The number of these bands, composed as they were of men of all nations, and the scourge that they laid upon France, form the burden of many a lamentation in the old French Chronicles. They roved about plundering, burning, and levying blackmail at their own sweet will; nor was there in the disorganised state of the country any chance of putting them down, for, ruffians though most of them were, they were experienced soldiers and fought like devils.

A certain number were at length taken away by Bertrand du Guesclin to fight against Pedro the Cruel in Spain, but Hawkwood's company was not of these. He stayed in France, and made a terrible name by desolating Champagne and Burgundy, and finally passing swiftly down the Rhone he appeared before Avignon and threatened the Pope himself. In vain the Holy Father offered indulgences to all who would go on a crusade, and shook all the terrors of bell, book, and candle

at those who dared to menace him; he was obliged to pay blackmail like the rest, and bribe them to take service with the Marquis of Montferrat against the Visconti in Italy. So this company, richer by four hundred pounds (a vast sum in those days), and a plenary indulgence to boot, marched into Piedmont.

There, however, Hawkwood for some reason left them and returned to France, where we find him in high command at the battle of Brignais in April, 1362. The marauding companies had been at their old work in the district of Lyons, and Jacques de Bourbon had been sent against them by the crown of France with sixteen hundred good fighting men. The French found the brigands posted on a hill-side where it was impossible to ascertain their numbers or position, but having a great contempt for their enemy they resolved to attack at once. But there were cunning soldiers on the hill that day. As the French advanced up the ascent they were met by a storm of great rolling stones, and the first line of attack was beaten back. Bourbon then brought up his second line by another side only to be received with the same terrible defence; and while he and his gallant companions were trying to struggle against it and manfully holding their ground, a mass of the adventurers appeared suddenly on their flank, dismounted, with shortened lances and in close array, as at Crécy and Poitiers, and overthrew them utterly. "These companions fought so ardently that it was marvel," says Froissart; with a crafty combination of the tactics of Morgarten and Crécy, he might have added. We think that we see Hawkwood's hand in this sudden flank attack.

The company, with Hawkwood still in subordinate command, then devastated Piedmont, and so passed



finally into Italy, to add one more plague to the many already afflicting that unhappy country. Every city was torn by factions and at feud with some other city: the Pope was represented by insolent and oppressive French legates, while he himself lay helpless at Avignon; and the Visconti, able, ambitious, unscrupulous, deeply soiled by every vice, but strong in tenacity of purpose, alone maintained some sway in Italy. Hawkwood and his company were now to make themselves felt as an additional power, and they made a terrible beginning. As they advanced into the Milanese they cut their mark deep with fire and sword, and the Visconti, at the moment weak in the field, could think of no means to check them except by further devastation which should cut off their supplies. The company answered by burning over fifty places, by destroying hundreds of others, and by making audacious and successful raids on Milan itself. Finally they crossed the Apennines into Tuscany and took service with Pisa in one of its periodical wars with Florence. At the close of the first campaign (1363) the English insisted that men of all other nations should be excluded from the band, and that Hawkwood should henceforward and always command it.

At this point we may glance at the organisation of this famous company, the White Company as it was now named.<sup>1</sup> Its numbers of course varied greatly, but when Hawkwood took over the command, it consisted of some three thousand five hundred horse and two thousand foot. The infantry were almost entirely archers, the famous English bowmen who by "laying their body to the

<sup>1</sup> White was at that time the English colour, a survival from the white cross worn by them in the Crusades. The red cross was assumed at the campaign of Navarrete (1367), and lasted till the coming of the red coats.

bow"<sup>2</sup> could shoot with more deadly effect than any men in Europe. They wore but little defensive armour, an iron helmet, an iron breastpiece and gauntlets. The cavalry was rather lighter than that of other nations, the men wearing less defensive armour, and the horses being less heavily caparisoned. The organisation, which was introduced into Italy by the English, was by "lances"; each lance consisted of three men, knight (*caporale*), squire, and page, the two former mounted on "great horses," the last on a pony. Five lances made a post, and five posts a standard; so that the squadron, as we should now call it, consisted of sixty-five men. There was generally also a commander for every ten lances, so that the organisation corresponds pretty accurately to that which lasted in the field until a few years ago in our own army; two troops each under a troop leader, combined with a squadron under a squadron leader. All officers of course were elected. But now the essentially English characteristic comes in. The cavalry almost invariably dismounted for action and fought on foot; such was the old English tradition from the days before the Conquest to Crécy, Poitiers, and even Agincourt. For action the whole body of cavalry was formed in a circular mass (also a relic of very early days) presenting a bristling unbroken ring of lances. Each lance was held by two men, the knight and his squire, and from the additional weight thus acquired could be thrust forward with immense force; but the formation was in its essence defensive. Meanwhile the horses were parked away under charge of the pages at some distance, for they were used only on the march and solely for purposes of swifter mobility. The

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Latimer's description of his training with the bow.

White Company was renowned for the speed of its marches, which were the more remarkable inasmuch as they were generally carried out by night ; a practice which we are now endeavouring to reintroduce. Another notable feature of the company was its scaling-ladders, which were constructed of separate pieces fitting one into the other, and were the germ of the modern fire-escape. Lastly, and this is peculiarly English, it was beautifully turned out on parade. Their arms were bright as diligent squires with sandstone and oil and leather could make them, and they were polished till they shone like mirrors. Possibly being a white company, they used even pipe-clay for their leather ; but on this point history is silent.

For the rest they were not reckoned so cruel as Germans and Hungarians, for though they made little of cutting throats, they stopped short at mutilation and roasting ; but they early gave rise to the proverb that the Englishman italianate is a devil incarnate. Moreover, they were past masters of the art of sacking, a pursuit in which the Teutonic natives generally yield the palm to the Latin. It is needless to add that they were inveterate gamblers. Light come, light go, has always been the rule among mercenaries ; and as it is not the English practice to draw a knife in a quarrel, we may reckon that they broke each other's heads pretty frequently with no great ill-will, and brought great profit to the Italian usurers, who kindly opened a bank for their special benefit.

It would be impossible, as well as wearisome, to follow Hawkwood step by step through the whole of his life in Italy. After the first campaign against Pisa the Florentines succeeded in bribing all but eight hundred men of the company to take service with them ; and it was from his loyalty to

the Pisans that Hawkwood first made his reputation for fidelity. Readers may doubt in the sequel whether this good report was well earned, but they must remember that straightforward dealing was rare in Italy in those days. The Pope was continually forming leagues to expel the adventurers from the country, but the leagues could never be held together. Occasionally the different bands met and quarrelled among themselves ; and Hawkwood himself suffered a severe defeat from attempting with inferior numbers to punish the deserters from Pisa. But defeats were of small importance to such a man, for the company was easily recruited up to its former strength. Florence finally bought immunity from injury by agreeing to pay him six thousand florins annually for five years, the first of many similar transactions between the two parties.

In 1368 Italy made a great effort to shake off the yoke of the Visconti. A great league was formed of the Pope, the Emperor, the King of Hungary, the Queen of Naples, and the lords of Mantua, Padua, and Ferrara. Against this coalition the Visconti took Hawkwood into their pay, who at once entered the territory of Mantua with fire and sword, and when the Emperor moved down towards him quietly broke the dykes of the Adige and flooded him out of the country. For this Englishman was a man of many wiles, who could make a handful of trumpets and drums personate an army on occasion, and always contrived to obtain accurate information as to his enemy. Next year his luck changed, and he was defeated and taken prisoner ; but he was no sooner ransomed than he was in the field again, this time against the Florentines, whom he defeated by the time-honoured stratagem of a feigned retreat and an ambush.

After some further service with the

Visconti he suddenly quarrelled with them, for what reason is unknown, and in 1372 passed straight into the pay of the Pope. He had been excommunicated times without number on previous occasions, but a couple of brilliant victories sufficed to reconcile him to the Church and to obtain from Gregory the assurance that he was a "most amiable person," and the man nearest his heart. Evidently there was a comical side to the adventurer's life, which we must hope that Hawkwood had the humour to enjoy. But an adventurer cannot live without pay, and Gregory was more profuse in compliments than in cash. The result was that the papal orders for the next campaign were not obeyed, and that Hawkwood began to cast about for more profitable employment. Gregory entreated him to organize a crusade, and St. Catherine of Siena wrote him a letter to the same end ; but so old a bird was not to be caught, and presently the general rebellion of all the papal towns gave him the opportunity that he needed. He, the most formidable man in Italy, though nominally still in the Pope's pay, was at liberty to do what he would and dictate his own terms. He moved straight upon Tuscany, and the great cities in terror opened their purses and asked how much he would take to spare them. He took a hundred thousand pounds, a gigantic sum at that time, and then rejoining the Pope for a heavy price indemnified himself for his arrears by the sack of Faenza. Bologna only saved herself from a similar fate by securing his two little sons and holding them as hostages. This was the greatest of his achievements in the province of extortion.

We must pass over the next three years which Hawkwood spent partly in the papal service and partly in retirement in his own castle of Cotignola, and come to the year 1376 when he

finally turned against the Church and took service with Florence, the city wherein his fame is chiefly remembered. He made the most exorbitant terms, but he could afford to do so, inasmuch as Pisa also was bidding for his services ; and finally he was not only engaged, but was appointed commander-in-chief of the forces of the anti-papal league, while to attach him still closer to the cause Bernabo Visconti, who was at its head, gave him his natural daughter to wife. The connection thus opened with Florence lasted to the end of his life, the two parties developing an ever increasing sentiment of regard for each other. The Florentines trusted implicitly that he would hold by his written engagements, and they were never deceived. As such contracts, except for immunity from plunder, seldom were made for more than six months, there was not perhaps so much difficulty in keeping to them ; but Hawkwood went beyond his contract to benefit Florence, and the city never forgot it. Hence he was repeatedly elected Captain-General, and favoured by exemption from taxes and other compliments, over and above direct payment for his services.

A final furious rupture with the Visconti in 1379 made Hawkwood a bitter foe of the family until the day of his death ; otherwise there is little that we need dwell on until we come to one of his most famous actions. A quarrel had broken out between the Carraras, lords of Padua, and the La Scalas, lords of Verona, each of whom hastened to engage mercenaries to fight for him. Hawkwood accepted service with the Carraras, and with an army of seven thousand five hundred horse and one thousand foot, boldly crossed the Adige and advanced into Veronese territory. The Veronese army, which numbered in all close on twelve thousand men, thereupon made a wide

détour, and hastening down the right bank of the Adige cut off Hawkwood's communication with Padua. All supplies being thus intercepted the Paduan army suffered terribly from hunger, and was forced to retreat. For more than forty days Hawkwood managed by hook or by crook to keep his men together. The stories of the time attribute to him actual miracles, and certainly he must have shown superhuman energy and resource to bring his army back as he did to the Adige. But once arrived at the bridge over the river, which led them from starvation to plenty, the army broke up. Half of it only remained with Hawkwood, the rest fled headlong over the bridge to Castelbaldo intent upon nothing but food. The Veronese army, of more than four times its strength, was close at hand, and the situation was as critical as a general's could be. Hawkwood chose the strongest position that he could find, entrenched it as well as he could, and lay on his arms for the night, sending, meanwhile, officers across the river to collect the fugitives and bring in supplies, a duty which was most energetically fulfilled.

Most men would have made all haste to put the river between themselves and the enemy, but Hawkwood knew better. Next morning he carefully reconnoitred the ground, and having made choice of his position, ordered his men first to eat and drink, and then to fall in. The line that he had chosen for his front lay along a deep trench or drain running from a swamp on his left to a canal on his right; his flanks rested thus on two firm points, the marsh itself and the dyke of the canal. Where the trench and the dam of the canal intersected each other, he constructed a bridge of ample width across the trench and threw up earthworks to protect the passage. He then dismounted six of his eight regiments of horse (they

varied in strength from five hundred to fifteen hundred men) and drew them up in two lines of three regiments apiece, the first resting on the trench, the second a crossbow shot in rear of it. The two mounted regiments made the third line, and the infantry proper was posted by the bridge that he had thrown over the trench on his right flank. His whole force numbered close on six thousand horse and a thousand foot.

His preparations were hardly completed when the enemy came up, with over nine thousand horse, sixteen hundred archers, sixteen thousand peasant infantry, and several pieces of artillery. They at once dismounted the whole of their cavalry, formed it in two lines, and advanced to the attack. Struggling manfully to carry the trench, they were beaten back by the battle-axes of Hawkwood's men. Most furious of all was the fighting in the centre, where stood the young son of the Lord of Padua, Francis Novello in command of his regiment, for the Veronese were bent on taking him if they could. Hawkwood begged him to retire rather than risk such a catastrophe, but he would not, though so hard pressed that Hawkwood was obliged to reinforce him. Very soon the enemy brought up their second line: the trench was filled with fascines, and the battle became more desperate than ever; but Hawkwood kept feeding the battle from his second line, and the trench was held. Finally, however, it was necessary to withdraw some of the infantry on the right flank to reinforce the centre, and then Hawkwood judged that the time was come for a counterstroke.

Handing over the command of the front to another officer he took a party of mounted men, five hundred horse and six hundred mounted

archers, under his personal direction, and bidding the infantry on the right also follow him, crossed the trench by the bridge that he had made and led them full on the enemy's left flank. "*Carne, carne* (flesh, flesh)!" he shouted, as, hurling his baton among the enemy, he drew his sword and his cavaliers pressed on after him with an irresistible shock. It came none too soon, for the enemy had called up their last reserves, and had fairly forced the trench. Dismayed by the defeat of their left wing they now gave way, and Francis Novello seized the moment to mount his regiment and charge; another regiment of the first line followed his example, and when they had broken the feeble resistance that still remained, the rest also mounted for the pursuit. Finally, the third line moved off swiftly to Legnano to cut off the retreat of a party of eight hundred Veronese who had contrived to reach their horses, and killed or captured every one. One small party of five thousand men, mostly peasant infantry, who had found a strong position among the deep drains of the marsh, still held out, but they were promptly attacked and dispersed. Then the darkness came down and the fight was over.

Never was victory more complete. The battle lasted little more than an hour. Nearly five thousand cavalry and eight hundred foot soldiers were captured, as well as a whole train of stores and artillery. Over seven hundred were killed and eight hundred wounded. And it must be remembered that this action took place a full century before the new birth of the art of war: the artistic handling of the fighting line, support and reserve, and the far-sighted preparation for the counterstroke were taught by no text books, and suggested by few, if any, previous examples; yet the most accomplished soldier of the

present day could hardly have fought his action more skilfully than Hawkwood. Not less noteworthy is the courage and confidence with which he sacrificed his communication with his base at Padua, and staked everything on the issue of a fight in which his skill alone availed to gain the victory.

After this campaign Hawkwood returned to Florence and lived for a short time in peace. The famous White Company was dispersed; but after very brief service with other captains the men drifted back to their old commander, unwilling to fight under any but him. His next expedition was to Naples, whence he was recalled by Florence to the more congenial task of taking the field against his greatest enemy, Gian Galeazzo Visconti. His total force was raised to nine thousand horse and five thousand foot, which made rendezvous at Padua in January, 1391, and after some days spent in manœuvres and sham fights, marched into Veronese territory to wrest the city from the Visconti. Little however was done till May, when Hawkwood, weary of desultory operations, crossed the Adige and struck boldly away for Milan. The campaign now resolved itself into a race for concentration. A force under the Count of Armagnac was expected from France to join Hawkwood, and the Visconti were therefore obliged to divide their army, which numbered twenty-six thousand men, to watch both divisions of their enemy. The question was which side could unite its forces first to annihilate the other in detail.

Hawkwood, always swift in his movements, pushed on across the Mincio, cut to pieces a force which tried to bar his passage of the Oglio, and finally crossing the Adda, halted to wait for Armagnac. He despatched messenger after messenger to hurry



him, but Armagnac with the self-sufficiency of eight and twenty, which presently led him to disaster and death, would not accelerate his march to oblige any one. Finally Jacopo del Verme, who commanded the army of the Visconti, seeing that there was nothing to be feared from the side of the Alps, concentrated the whole of his force against the army on the Adda; and there was Hawkwood left isolated on the far side of the river, with four difficult streams barring the line of his retreat, and a superior force waiting to cut him off.

Jacopo wrote to his master to ask "how he wished the enemy to be settled," so confident was he of success, but Hawkwood was not to be disposed of so easily. Immediately on receiving the news of Armagnac's defeat he began his retreat, re-crossed the Adda, and was in Cremonese territory, between that river and the Oglio, when Visconti's army came upon him. He thereupon halted and entrenched himself, while the enemy encamped a mile away, and tried by insult and bravado to entice him from his position. Del Verme sent him a fox in a cage in token of his derision, but Hawkwood quietly broke a bar and let the fox escape, observing that the animal was not such a fool but that he would find a way out. For four days he allowed the enemy to play their antics unharmed; but on the fifth he suddenly sallied out and fell upon them with such vigour that no fewer than fifteen hundred were killed or wounded, and twelve hundred taken prisoners. That same night he tied his banners to the tree-tops, left the trumpeters behind with orders to keep sounding the alarm until daylight, and marched quietly away, taking care to drop several of his baggage-animals on the way, that the capture of such spoil might delay the enemy's march.

Next day he reached the Oglio, and while marching up the bank to find a ford was again met by the enemy. What happened there is uncertain; all that is known is that after two days' incessant fighting, gallant old Hawkwood forced the passage of the river and continued his retreat. He must have taught the troops of the Visconti a severe lesson, for they allowed him to pass the Mincio and Adige without molestation. Moreover Armagnac was now beginning to emerge from the Alps, which made a diversion in his favour.

But the greatest danger of the retreat came after the passage of the Adige. He was encamped in the plain between the Adige, the Po, the Rovigo, and the Polesina, and in apparent safety, when Jacopo del Verme suddenly broke the embankments of the Adige (those rivers, it must be remembered, like most rivers that rise from glaciers, raise their beds above the level of the plain), and turned the whole of its waters upon the army. It was night, and the whole camp was at rest, when it was awakened by the sound of the rising flood, to find the plain turned into a vast lake. The situation was one which would try the best general and the best troops in the world to the utmost, but Hawkwood was equal to it. So unbounded was the confidence of his men in him that there was no panic. He quietly ordered the cavalry to mount and to take up the infantry behind them; and then putting himself at their head he made shift, by his knowledge of the ground and such guidance as was given by the tops of trees above the water, to lead them out of the inundation. All that day and part of the next night the unhappy men splashed on, the water never lower than their horses' bellies, now plunging deep into some canal whose banks were hidden by the inundation, now sticking fast

in some treacherous swamp. One can hardly conceive of a more terrible march than this through that icy water. From time to time men and horses dropped down and sank out of sight; but the mass kept moving on with the indomitable veteran at their head, and at length struck the Adige below the rupture, crossed the dry shingly bed, and were in safety once more.

At Padua Hawkwood was gladly entertained by his old pupil Francis Novello, but the total defeat of Armagnac and the facilities thus afforded to the Visconti of carrying the war into Tuscany, forced him to retire by rapid marches across the Apennines for the protection of Florence. There, after weeks of skilful manœuvring and one brilliant victory, the campaign was finally brought to an end by a general peace, and Hawkwood finally retired into private life at Florence.

There all was done for him that a grateful city could do. The Florentines, when they heard of his straits north of the Po, had given up their army for lost; and yet it had returned to them, weakened indeed, but still strong and efficient, after a retreat which for skill, courage and resolution must be reckoned among the most memorable in history. And this it owed to an old man past seventy, an adventurer who, if he had followed the example of most of his kind, would have cared for nothing but to save his own skin and left his army to its fate. The city had already voted him rewards

during the campaign; it now gave him a handsome pension for his life, to be continued to his widow after his death, provided dowries for his daughters, and set about erecting a monument to contain his ashes when his end should come. He appears, however, to have been constantly in pecuniary difficulties, from which Florence with inexhaustible generosity as constantly delivered him.

At last, in 1394, the heart of the old man grew sick for home. He asked that his pension might be commuted to a lump sum, and within five days after the application he was dead. Florence mourned him with a great public funeral, and raised to him the monument which is still to be seen in the Duomo. But Richard the Second, to his honour, claimed the ashes of so great a soldier for England, and Florence with great courtesy consented to part with them. So at last Hawkwood went home; and his body was buried under the gray skies of England, whose memory not forty years of sunny Italy could banish from the rough old warrior's heart.

In England he survives as little but a name; but in Florence the inscription may still be read on his monument: JOANNES ACUTUS EQUES BRITANNICUS DUX ÆTATIS SUE CAUTISSIMUS ET REI MILITARIS PERITISSIMUS HABITUS EST. The most skilful general of his age! There are but two Englishmen to whom this title has been universally conceded, John Churchill and John Hawkwood.

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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## A BRIDE ELECT.

### CHAPTER X.

HE threw away the cigar as he raised his hat and came forward to greet me. "Forgive me," he said, "if I have waited here listening to your music. I have been anxious to speak to you for a long time now, and I could not forego the chance of finding you alone. This path behind the church is a private one; will it tax your patience too much to grant me a few moments here and now? If we walk up and down we shall not be observed, and you must let me unburden you of that."

He took the roll of music from me as he spoke, and I turned mechanically to walk beside him. I might doubt him from a distance, and regard him through the distorting mists of Janie's hinted accusation; but nothing of this could endure against the charm of his presence. Perhaps he divined the feeling, for as I surrendered the parcel and our eyes met, his regard, which had been penetrating, anxious, insistent, softened into a smile. "I told you once before I had the instinct of knowing a friend; it is on the faith of this that I dare speak to you of what lies next my heart, of matters on which to all else my lips are sealed. I could not approach you when my enemy was at your elbow; but now,

No. 436.—VOL. LXXIII.

—now, Miss Varney, tell me. You saw *her* in the crystal,—Barbara, my angel, my beloved? How did she come before you, and with what surroundings? Every detail is important; tell me all."

It was fresh in my memory,—the parting cloud, the anxious eager face, the lips which seemed to speak. I described it, replying as well as I could to his questions. He had drawn my hand within his arm as we paced slowly to and fro, and he pressed it against his side with a groan. "It is given," he said, "to the pure in heart. I have gazed into that crystal since I moved it from before you, but to me no vision was vouchsafed. She is obdurate, dead as alive. But I will cross the line of division; I will find her. You have sought here; I seek beyond. She cannot elude me for ever, for she is mine."

I caught at the one point which seemed comprehensible in this wild speech. "You agree then with Mr. Alleyne at last? You think she is dead?"

"She is dead," he answered. "The chill has touched my heart. I am seeking her beyond." He kept silence till we turned under the sheltering wall, and when he spoke again it was in a more ordinary tone. "You wonder, doubtless, that I speak of her as

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mine, and question the right of an unanswered love. Yet mine she was inalienably, both in this world and in that world to come, about which we have a way of talking so glibly and taking so little practical thought ; no father's denial, no marriage vows if she had lived to assume them, would have altered what I mean. She is the other half of my soul. Divided we might have been : divided you will say we are ; but it is only for a season. Our union in the end is sure, —for Hell or Heaven. And whether in Hell or Heaven it matters little, for where she is will be Heaven to me."

A madman's utterance you will say who read it, and wonder that I did not leave him forthwith to seek the safety of sane companionship. But if you had heard it from those grave lips, spoken with that air of authoritative conviction, you might have thought differently, for the time.

"You will ask me," he went on, "why if I have this conviction I am not content to wait. The time was when I thought it easy, were it for half an eternity ; knowing the end to be sure however long she might elude me, might play with me and keep me at bay as she did when I was her earthly lover. But I cannot, I cannot. There is an end to endurance. All my being craves for her ; without her my strength is as water. Ambition is dead, the world is empty, and beyond it is only,—Barbara. I have eyes for nothing else, ears for nothing but her voice. From her station of vantage she draws me while she repulses me ; and it comes to this,—I must compel her or follow her." He had turned to face me in the passion of this declaration. That he was in deadly earnest none could doubt, or that the power of this extraordinary fancy upon him was real and actual. "I have been at fault in all my

labours," he said almost with violence. "The body is nothing,—an image of clay,—no more. It is the spirit, the living *Ego* in whatever form it manifests, that is the centre of desire." I suppose something of my bewilderment was evident ; his manner altered, and a chill ghost of a smile curved his lips. "You are Barbara's near kinswoman ; you are like her in mind as well as outwardly. You will be my friend, you will respect my confidence, but your belief is slow of ignition. Everything must be tried at the bar of reason, a reason trained to be narrow ; you cannot trust your intuitions. There is just the same hardness about you as about her, though you listen so compassionately."

I made a grasp after my vanishing common sense,—with both hands as it were, and a prick of indignation to help me. "Surely," I said, "you did not talk like this to Barbara !

"You must give me credit for a certain discretion ; I would not alarm the girl I hoped to win. Nor do I mean to alarm you, but if you are to help me I must have you understand both my position and my claim."

"To help you !" I echoed. "How is it possible for me to help you ?"

"You have shown the faculty of perceiving her under the new conditions. If you are associated with me in the quest, it may prove transferable, as second sight is said to be. Let her come as she will,—reveal what she will,—so that she comes."

I shook my head. "If I could give you any comfort of heart I would gladly," I answered ; "but I have never been accustomed to attach to these things the importance you do. They are outside the circle of common experience and of my conceptions of life, and have brought me nothing but trouble and perplexity. I wish indeed it were possible to transfer to you what you call my faculty. But you must

remember I am not the only one who has exercised it ; if it were so I could easily believe myself the victim of hallucination."

"I know,—Alleyne and the servant : but it may all radiate through you in a way you do not understand."

"If it means anything at all, if it is truly Barbara, I am inclined to believe with old Evans that she is distressed at our ignorance of her fate, and is longing to come back and enlighten us."

"Then, don't you think it worth while to follow up the clue by any means our limited knowledge indicates, so that she may enlighten us ? Be that as it will, so long as she comes back to me."

"Evans has heard footsteps ; Lady Sudeleigh followed a figure in the road, though Gregory does not wish it mentioned, and it may have been a chance resemblance. And here in the church, not an hour ago, the child who blows the organ for me was frightened by an appearance he professed to recognise." I told the story as little Sykes had told it to me : the figure kneeling at the altar rails the first day, of which he had not felt afraid ; and then the appearance that came behind me as I sat playing, which struck him with such consternation and awe, and yet was recognisable as "Miss Barbara who went away." I was almost afraid of the eagerness of my listener, such a fire of hope, elation, yearning, seemed to blaze up in him as he listened. He took my hand again in a close clasp, and I felt the compulsion of his will closing round me and paralysing resistance.

"You have indicated the path," he said. "You asked how you might help me, and yourself have shown the way. You are not expected at the house yet ; the child's terror cut short your hour. Come back into the church with me ; repeat the conditions which

attracted her, and see if she will return."

It was a sign of his influence over me that I had no thought of refusal. We turned back to the door, and when I bungled with inapt fingers at the lock, he opened it for me and followed me in. The place had never seemed so deserted or struck so chill ; the shadows had deepened and the light had faded since I left it, though there remained sufficient for our purpose. I took my seat, and opened the symphony in the midst of which Sykes had failed me, and he took the child's place at the lever facing the length of the dim church ; the organ was at the west end under the tower. As soon as the indicator had risen I began to play, trying to lose myself in my office and forget the strange situation into which I had been drawn. And strange indeed it was ; the darkening church, the watch for the manifestation of a disembodied spirit in which in some mysterious fashion I was to aid, the companionship of one whose sanity was at least questionable. I glanced round at him from time to time, but his eyes were always intent on vacancy, glowing bright under the shadow of contracted brows out of a face deathly pale. His forehead was damp and the veins stood out upon it, while his lips moved soundlessly. Still for all this he was sufficiently master of himself to keep the lever at work ; and I played on to the end of my symphony, and then turned back to the opening bars and repeated it, long as it was. As the last chords died away and my hands dropped, I paused out of sheer fatigue, wondering whether I had done my part and what had resulted. I heard a long quivering sigh at my elbow ; Mr. Redworth was leaning on the arrested lever, and when I turned to him he spoke more naturally, though in a



voice low and exhausted. "You have been very good, Miss Varney. I have felt her presence: it seems to thrill all the air about me; but she withholds herself from sight and touch. There is a barrier I must break down."

I thought better of the question which rose to my lips, but he answered it presently as if it had been spoken, though not till we had left the church. He gathered up the music for me and closed the organ; and when at the outer door he gave me back the keys, he said: "I will tell you what I mean to do. It will be a secret between you and me only, a secret you will keep." He turned again into the path where we had walked before, and I with him, drawn by his will in the matter, though I would fain have escaped to the house.

"The true alchemist," he went on, "has open to him two spheres, the physical and the celestial; but if he would tread the higher way he must utterly put from him all advantage of the inferior, not serving God and Mammon. I must nullify my work of forty years, my dreams of worldly eminence, of advantage and renown; but that is a small matter. Alverius Vericus, an older writer than Paracelsus, describes the successive steps of initiation, and the chemical compound whereby, in conjunction with certain abstinences, the necessary condition of body is attained. The first is termed the Threshold, and the initiate enters with the figure of a drawn sword against the Elemental shapes; but here the danger is only to the resolution of the inner man; the union with mortality is not threatened. The second step is the Vestibule; here the emblem is changed to a smoking torch, and he sees, but as in a glass darkly. In this the danger is but slightly increased; but the initiate is warned to test his

powers of body and soul before advancing to the Presence Chamber where we see face to face. The behest is that he should set his affairs in order and depart as one that cometh not again. Yet many of the masters have dwelt in the Presence Chamber, and gone in and out from the ways of the world, beholding when they would their soul's desire. It is possible she may come to me on the threshold; that the dimness of the vestibule may not divide us; but if needful I shall advance to full initiation where success is certain. If that is so, I may have to ask a favour at your hands; it will only be a slight one, entailing a less troublesome task than I have imposed on you to-day. I need not ask if you will guard my confidence; I see it in your face."

He had bared his head as he spoke, pushing back the waves of silvered hair; and he remained uncovered as we said farewell. I did not see him after that for many days.

These were the days of Eleanor's danger and the crisis of her illness. I will not follow all the hopes and fears of that anxious time, which seemed to draw Gregory and his wife nearer together than perhaps they had ever been in their lives before. That was well, and it was well she was given back to him; for the shock of what came after would have been too great had either stood alone. Mr. Redworth was not neglectful of his friends: he came or sent frequently to inquire, but he did not ask to see me; and as it happened through all that time when I was stirring abroad but little, we did not chance to meet. I confess I often thought of him and of our last interview under the shadow of the church; dissatisfied with myself that I had entered no protest of any sort against the wild words I had been forced to

hear. And yet I knew that were it to come over again I could not do otherwise; the spell upon me would be so great that I could only fill the part of a passive listener, of almost a believing one. It was necessary for me to be removed from his strong personal influence, before common sense was able to assert itself and I could be even critical. I kept his confidence: I had no disposition to break it; but I did think sometimes with a touch of anxiety of the fantastic experiment he proposed to try on himself, and felt curious as to the result. Little Sykes earned no more sixpences, for I did not touch the organ except on Sundays; other occupations forbade it, and besides I felt a shuddering distaste for the conditions of solitude which had been productive of a result so unforeseen.

Time went on, and Eleanor struggled slowly back to convalescence. Janie was beginning to feel anxious about her plans, and to press for a decision; when the news of an unexpected calamity fell upon us at the Rectory. It was not personal to any of us, but we all sorrowed for our friends; and there were unspoken thoughts if I mistake not, of the difference it might have made to Barbara's future had all been well with her, and had that terrible Christmas fulfilled its promise in making her Dick Sudeleigh's wife. News arrived from India, first by telegram and the sad details following by letter, of Maxwell Sudeleigh's death. This was the elder son, himself a middle-aged man, Dick's only brother and Sir Richard Sudeleigh's heir. The blow was too much for the old father, hitherto so hale and active; he was struck down by it into a living death, and at first the end was hourly anticipated. Lady Sudeleigh wrote to Eleanor in her bitter distress, and telegrams were

sent abroad to intercept Dick at the most likely ports. By good fortune these reached him speedily, and he came home overland by the quickest routes; finding all at Leigh Hall in depths of mourning for the heir, but old Sir Richard, contrary to all expectation, beginning to rally physically from the stroke, though with powers of mind so withered and blighted that partial recovery became more deplorable than the death which had been feared.

We heard of Dick's return to Leigh the morning Janie left Ditchborough,—a late May morning which wept like April in alternate showers and gleams. She had wept also more tears than we knew of. She had grown paler and thinner and older in those sad months; but over the farewells she was very steady. Gregory and I kept counsel about the true reason for departure. He thought the knowledge would needlessly distress Eleanor, who vibrated between a certain irrepressible relief, and a fretful wonderment that Janie should think less of her duty to those who had brought her up, than of a voluntarily assumed duty towards an indefinite neighbour. Janie thanked her at the last for the home she had found with them, and the two women kissed each other as women will whatever lies beneath; while Evans looked on with tightly compressed lips, an embodiment of the spirit which had driven her forth.

But when it came to Gregory it was a different matter, and she put her arms round his neck in a real caress. "God bless you, child," he said. "You have been a daughter to me all these years, and I shall miss you sorely." Then for the first time her voice broke. "Uncle," she said, "if you want me,—if ever you want me, send for me and I will come. I will come back wherever I am." I

think it was on his lips to say he wanted her and she must not go ; but he kissed her instead, and put her in the carriage which was to take us to the station.

I drove there with her, and saw her off from the same country platform which had witnessed my arrival ; a small waif of humanity pushing out her frail skiff into the wider sea of the great world, with a sad heart as I knew, and yet with some steady shining of hope and courage in her fixed purpose. I had repented my sins towards her many times over, my sins of suspicion and suggestion which had never been translated into speech. Over and over again I had assured myself of her innocence ; and over and over again, I know not how, the assurance had to be made anew. But the need for it was nearly over ; I was soon to doubt no more. She thanked me for my kindness to her, poor child, as we stood together in the narrow shelter and watched the red front of the engine rounding the curve, burning nearer and nearer through the slanting lines of rain. Then came the brief halt, the bustle of a few moments, and then the small pale face nodding farewell to me from the window moving away.

It was over, and I felt myself solitary with that curious reaction which sometimes comes unexpectedly in parting with one whom we have not greatly valued in daily companionship ; a token I suppose that the link has really been a closer one than we divined.

Early in the week following Dick Sudeleigh came to Ditchborough. Eleanor was touchingly glad to see him, almost as much so as if the relations between them had been those of real mother and son. Just then, I think, all her capacity of affection was quickened, with the feeling, as it were, of respite from nearly contemplated

death ; as Hezekiah may have felt when the shadow went back on the sun-dial of Ahaz. He asked for Janie soon after his arrival, and when told that she was gone to London, as if on an ordinary visit, I thought he betrayed unequivocal disappointment. Nothing was then said about St. Cyprian's, nor later when he and I and Gregory dined together ; Eleanor though so much stronger was still restricted to invalid hours. But when the two gentlemen were left together over their wine the whole story came out ; the story, that is, so far as Gregory knew how to tell it. Feeling the house oppressive with the summer heat which had come upon us suddenly, I had caught up a shawl and strolled out into the garden, where all was light as yet in the June evening, though with a tender browning of the shadows, and the crescent of the new moon beginning to show in silver above the trees. It was there Dick came to me, greatly agitated as I could see, and he broke out at once in wonderment and even anger. What could we all have been thinking of,—that was what it came to, though less bluntly put—to let Janie suffer under such a shameful error, and at last be driven away like a guilty creature from the safe shelter of home ? “I should like to twist the necks of all the fools in the parish,” he said. “Janie harm Barbara ! Janie, who would not hurt any living creature, who has the tenderest heart in the world ! And not the shadow of a motive ; what motive could there be, Miss Varney ? Answer me that !” I shook my head dumbly. I had nothing to say. For Janie's sake, as much as any other, it was impossible to answer. “And Mr. Alleyne says nothing has been done. It was all I could do to keep my patience, to remember the respect I owe him. Was there ever such a ghastly blunder ?

She was always working for the people, her fingers to the bone I used to say ; and that they should have turned against her, the whole place, Mr. Alleyne says, with open insult and taunts ! And he wanted her to brave it out, though no one took her part. If I had only been here ! What she must have suffered, poor child, poor little darling ; and her letters were always cheerful,—never a word of it to me.”

I tried to set him right on one or two points. Janie herself had begged us to be silent ; she could not bear the charge against her made a matter of discussion. “If you had known,” I said to him ; “if you had been here all through, what in Heaven’s name could you have done ?”

“I would have done this. I would have shown them all there was one who believed in her, the one who had best reason to know. I would have gone to her and begged her to take me,—to give me a right to protect her,—to honour my name by bearing it——” He was forced to stop abruptly to steady his voice. Was this Barbara’s lover ? I wondered what Eleanor would say, and Lady Sudeleigh. And,—poor Janie !—it would be no vindication ; people would say she had schemed for it from the beginning. “It is not too late,” he went on. “I will go to her now,—to this convent sisterhood, this humbugging St. Cyprian’s. I will force them to let her see me. Mr. Alleyne says there have been no vows.”

“Forgive me, Mr. Sudeleigh, if I say I hope you will think it over before you do anything of the kind. Such a step ought not to be taken on any rash impulse, however generous. It might give pain to others, to Janie even ; and your family would hardly approve.”

“Generous ! the generosity will be hers if she will take me. I sup-

pose you think [biting his moustache savagely, and looking moodily before him], it is natural you should think, I have forgotten Barbara.” It was more an assertion than a question, and I did not interrupt him by reply. “I have not forgotten her ; I never shall forget her ; it will never be the same for me again. I have been wretched for months, not knowing whether she was dead or alive ; but I begin to think it is as my mother says. If she is dead I must take up my life without her ; if she is alive she must have left me to form other ties, and so we are equally divided. I could be happy with Janie if she would have me. I always loved her, in a way, and was sorry she had such a hard time of it, from the first. I cannot have you speak of generosity. It is best for me ; and surely not worse for her, poor child, than being alone ?”

What could I say, how could I tell him ? It must be Janie herself if any one, though the confession would be terribly hard. Would she ever have courage to acknowledge the reason why suspicion had fallen upon her, and the motives with which she was credited ? Would she see clearly as I did, that even if guiltless she could not join hands with Dick without injuring herself and him ? We had threaded the shrubbery walk, and emerged on to the lawn when he went on.

“You spoke of disapproval on the part of my family ; I do not anticipate it in the least. My poor father is not likely to understand anything about it ; it is my mother’s great wish that I should marry. They approved of the former affair ; and Janie is Barbara’s cousin, of equal birth. And though she is without fortune, I do not want it ; I should not have wanted it when I only had Pengarth, and now I am my father’s heir.”

I ventured to hint that was just

the reason why Lady Sudeleigh would expect a more advantageous connection; but, like a man, he would listen to no suggestion which opposed his will. Mr. and Mrs. Alleyne, he was confident, would be pleased; and he thought Barbara herself would have wished it, would rather Janie than any other filled her vacant place. That is an argument one often hears in favour of man's inconstancy. I could do no more than beg him to consider well before committing himself to any action which would be beyond recall; and when he left Ditchborough next day I did not know whether he proposed returning to Leigh, or going at once to London.

#### CHAPTER XI.

THE afternoon of Dick's departure I went out for a solitary walk, Eleanor not happening to want me, and the abounding summer beauty drawing me irresistibly to its enjoyment. I revelled in the fresh green of the young foliage, the beauty of flowering trees and the tints of earth and sky, and drank in the balmy air which seemed to revive all the springs of life. I loved the loneliness of the moor; I am not by nature a gregarious animal, and the solitudes of this remote district to me were never cheerless. I mounted the hill down which Gregory had driven me to my first sight of Ditchborough, and walked some distance beyond, watching the waste as it purpled under the passing clouds, and listening to the larks as they carolled their songs in thrills of transport, until invisible in the blue. A few sheep cropping here and there at the sparse grass raised their heads to look at me; a rabbit darted away to hide his tell-tale white ensign in some sheltering burrow.

I had regained the road on turning

homeward, and was on the brow which looks over Coldhope when the quick trot of a horse came up behind me. The rider was Mr. Redworth, who drew rein at once and dismounted. "Miss Varney, I am fortunate in overtaking you. I was only now thinking how I could contrive to see you alone."

We had met several times since I played for him in the church, but it was always in company. I knew nothing more of his wild experiments and singular mental state.

"I am going to remind you of your promise to do me a favour; and I want a few,—last words, as they may be. If I lead my horse at your side I shall not detain you nor excite remark; and as you helped me before, you will not refuse to help me now. My little enemy has left Ditchborough, and a certain faithless lover has followed in her footsteps,—'like a doting mallard, claps wing, flies after!'—and you are in perplexity about them both. Is it not so? Ah, my friend, do not look so astonished! And if I know thus much, perhaps I have no need to ask whether you have given a thought to me. It may be I even know the nature of the thought; pity for the madman whose raving alarmed you, and whose confidences might have been communicated in Bedlam. And perhaps, by treason of yourself against yourself, a single heart-beat of sympathy for one who for love's sake would dare the realms of night and all the powers of the unseen, following his Eurydice."

"I have thought of you, wondering over all you told me and the experiment you contemplated."

"I have traversed the second degree; the next step will be full initiation. You will think I have postponed it over long, that I have turned coward on the verge; but it is not so. The behest is first to set



your house in order, and depart as one that cometh not again. That has been my care in these last weeks, and it has occupied some time and thought, and sent me on several journeys. I have only now to conclude my arrangement with you,—the trifling favour I spoke of—and then I shall be free.” His eyes shone as if with a glad anticipation; he drew up his spare sinewy figure and lifted his head. Whatever the ordeal might be, it was evident he did not fear it. “Before I pass to that I want to ask you,—you have no doubt, have you, that I love Barbara; that I loved her first and last, as the woman I would have won, and now as the soul I seek?”

“No doubt at all.”

“Never let that conviction be shaken. I would have given my life for hers, my body to torture, to spare her a single pang. Sudeleigh was a boy who cared for nothing but the gratification of a fancy; like a child denied a toy he raves for a while, and then turns lightly to another. She was and is my all; the soul of my soul, my star and fate. I have seen her since I spoke with you last.”

“That was what you desired.”

“Not yet the full measure for which I long; I shall find that in the Presence Chamber. But her shadow rested on the threshold; I beheld her in the Hall of Vision, though veiled and separated so that I failed to touch even the hem of her garment. You have heard, Miss Varney, of a man dying for joy?”

“I have read of such cases.”

“It is not a common fate, yet I feel as if it would be mine. When I think of the rapture before me my heart fails to beat; it thrills through all my breast with a great trembling of ecstasy. To meet her eyes with a smile in them, to feel her soul drawn to mine, compelled to mine by a law beyond resistance, the will to resist

submerged in the attraction. The Heaven you righteous people believe in could give no more.” The tremor he spoke of was real, it shook him visibly; he drew deep breaths in silence for some minutes, leaning one arm upon the saddle. “I have no dread of the ordeal. The first stages have not tried me, as I was led to expect. I found no failure in myself; the desire was only to penetrate deeper, to see more fully, not to be dragged back by reviving nature. The first trance was very brief; the second lasted some hours; the duration of that which is before me I cannot calculate; but, if vitality survives the shock, it will be mine to terminate or renew at will, passing in and out from the Presence Chamber to this common world, carrying the light of it into the life I have yet to endure. Oh Barbara, Barbara!” It was a strange medley,—the joy he spoke of and the rapture of anticipation; and then the groan of irrepressible anguish with which he called upon her name. My own heart beat fast with agitation as I listened, but his power over me seemed to conquer fear. “I have set my house in order as I am enjoined. Some affairs, with which I need not weary you in detail, proved difficult of arrangement, but now the way is clear; I have only to give Nursoo his final instructions. Possibly this evening, perhaps to-morrow, I shall send to your custody a sealed packet. The favour I ask is that you will keep it for me in safe charge till this crisis is over. If all is well I will claim it from you direct, doubtless within forty-eight hours; but if certain intelligence should reach you of my death,—no rumour, but the information direct—break the seals and act on the instructions within. You promise?”

“Yes,” I said, “I promise.”

“If comment is excited, say I asked you to take care of a packet of valu-

ables for me during a chemical experiment I thought hazardous. There will be nothing extraordinary in that, or likely to involve you in difficulty. If I do not survive, the experiment will pass as an ordinary one in the course of my known researches. And now, farewell." He took my hand and pressed it, looking earnestly in my face. "I care little for the opinion of my fellows; but if ever you are tempted to judge me harshly, remember what I questioned and what you replied."

He wrung my hand again; then leading his horse further out from the path, mounted and rode away towards Coldhope.

I felt troubled and uneasy as I entered the Rectory, as if with the shadow of some near calamity. I could not at once shake off the impression of what I had heard. Eleanor was down stairs waiting for me to dispense tea and cheerful conversation; I did my best to make the effort, but I am afraid she found me a duller companion than usual. We were alone, for Gregory had gone to attend a clerical gathering at Lynchester, and was not expected back till late; supper was to be served at half-past nine, instead of the usual dinner. We sat and chatted over fancy stitches and household matters; over Dick's improved looks, bronzed as he was by sea air and southern suns, and the last sad letters from Leigh, till it was Eleanor's hour for retiring. Evans came with the shawl she still wore in the passages, and to gather up the small paraphernalia which accompanied her to her room; and I was left alone in the ghostly drawing-room and the fading light.

I opened the window which had been closed on Eleanor's account, and refused the lamp lest it should draw in errant moths to the attraction of the light; and so sitting in the dusk,

and the warm air wafting in the sweet breath of the garden, I passed from conscious to unconscious thought, and slept and dreamed.

I am accustomed to the vague absurdities which are wont to visit us in sleep, but this dream had a character of its own which marked it separate from any former experience. To begin with, it revived a memory. I was sitting in that very chair and place, but all about me had come the chill of winter, and I shivered in my sleep. I had gone back to the night when we watched for Barbara, and ears and heart were again strained with the agony of expectation. The trees were bare again, the flowers were dead, and snow was falling through the grayness of a winter dawn. A sharp tapping made me start and turn to the window, impatient fingers drumming on the glass, and there was Barbara looking in through the transparent division. There was the same excited look on her face which I had seen in the crystal; she held up to me in her left hand some papers folded lengthwise, and knocked hurriedly with the other. "Let me in," she said, "let me in." I started up with the impulse to obey her, and lo, in a moment the dream was broken. The snow and the cold were gone, the gray dawn had changed into the summer dusk, the window was open at my elbow, and there was no Barbara!

Gregory was late back that evening, and I thought he appeared out of spirits as I faced him at the delayed supper. He told me of his business and the events of the day, but it seemed an effort to him to talk, and he soon relapsed into silence. Presently he said, pushing away from him an almost untasted plate: "I cannot think how it is, but my poor girl is very much on my mind to-night. I have been thinking about it all day,—the disappearance I mean—the same

weary round of conjecture we used to go over so often six months ago. If I were a superstitious man, I should believe the knowledge we have sought vainly for so long was coming to us at last."

I thought of my dream, but was spared the necessity of answering as the servant entered with a parcel. For Miss Varney, she said; Nursoo had brought it, and was instructed to wait for an answer. The packet was not large, but thick and rather heavy; sealed in two places with the impression of interlaced triangles, but no crest. There was a separate note which read as follows :

I send the parcel, as I am trying to-night the experiment of which I told you. In case of the worst, keep it unopened till the doctor gives an order for my burial, which is not to take place until there is unmistakable evidence of death. I hope to reclaim it to-morrow or the day after, and myself acquaint you that all is well; you must not surrender it to any messenger. Let me have a line by the bearer to tell me it has reached your hands.—VICTOR REDWORTH.

The arrival of the letter had the effect of diverting Gregory's mind from his sad thoughts, and he was almost jocular on the subject of my correspondence as I scribbled in pencil a message of acknowledgment and sent it out to the Hindu servant. It amused him very much that Susan should be getting up a flirtation with the master of Coldhope; the relations that had seemed impossible for Barbara's youth did not appear to strike him as out of place for my maturer years.

Well, I need not dwell on that. I took the packet away with me to my room and locked it for safe custody in a trunk; and during the peaceful hours which followed I was disturbed but little by anxiety for my friend. I thought of him when I woke, and of the dread ordeal of which he had

spoken; but sleep visited my pillow as usual both that night and the next, and I descended to breakfast on the second morning without misgiving. It was fair weather with high white clouds crossing the blue sky, and a heavy dew sparkling over the lawn in the early sun.

Gregory and I were again alone, as Eleanor breakfasted in her room. The meal was over, and the table in process of clearing, though my cousin had not yet betaken himself to his study, when Mary came in with a message. "If you please, sir, it is Nursoo, and I am afraid something is wrong. The dog-cart is at the gate, and he wants to see you and Miss Varney."

"Miss Varney also? Then tell him to come in here. You do not mind?" he added to me as the handmaiden departed. No, I did not mind; but no doubt I had turned pale, for a sudden terror had begun to grip my heart.

The Hindu looked ashen under his dark skin, and was trembling visibly. I had never heard him speak before: he had always seemed a sort of automaton; but his story, though confused and broken, was sufficiently intelligible. Mr. Redworth had been trying an experiment, he was always trying experiments, and when he gave orders not to be disturbed none of the household dared go near him. On Thursday evening he had food put ready in the library, and wine in case he needed it; and Nursoo was directed not to enter the room again for thirty-six hours unless summoned. The bell did not ring, and though this was nothing unusual the man had felt alarmed; he could not tell why. He went into the ground-floor bedroom which opened from the library punctually on the stroke of nine on the second morning, but found no trace of occupation. Mr. Redworth was in the library, sitting in the chair as he

had left him, but to all appearance dead. There was a written paper under his hand with directions to fetch the doctor, and inform Mr. Alleyne and me. The groom had taken the dog-cart on at once, and Nursoo was returning on foot ; indeed he showed throughout an evident haste and nervous anxiety to be gone.

Gregory looked very grave over this intelligence. He said he would return to Coldhope with the Hindu, and await Dr. Carpenter's arrival ; and I followed him into the hall while he got his hat, and changed his coat. "It may be only a trance," I contrived to say to him. "Do not let the doctor take anything for granted."

They were a strange pair as they went off together ; the portly clerical Englishman and the slender turbaned foreigner ; and they turned, I noticed, towards the gate into the woods, the shortest way to the house.

The afternoon was well on its way before my cousin returned. The anxious hours had passed slowly without tidings, though the rumour that Mr. Redworth was dead seemed to flash electrically over the village, and was brought to the house by sundry chance comers. I felt uneasy under my burden of knowledge, and the possession of the packet also weighed on me. I got out my keys to see if it was still secure, and looked again at the note folded away with it, instructing me not to open it till the doctor signed the order for burial.

Gregory came straight to us in the morning-room, and dropped wearily into the nearest chair. "I shall have to look up an old sermon for to-morrow," he said somewhat irrelevantly. "I can settle to nothing after such a morning. I feel completely unhinged."

Eleanor was readier with her inquiry than I was. "Is it really death ?" she said. "Did you see him ?"

"Yes, I saw him ; and I waited there till Carpenter came, which was not till one o'clock or even later. The man had driven from place to place after him, as he had left on his round. He says there is little doubt Redworth had been dead for hours when he was found, but he had him moved to the bed and did what he could to restore life. There is just this question of catalepsy, as it is impossible to say what the experiment was ; so no steps can be taken till decomposition appears. Then there will have to be an examination, and an inquest, and what not ! It is a sad business. Nursoo's story hardly prepared me for what I was to see. He took me into the library, where one window had been hastily uncurtained ; and there, with the light streaming in on him, was Redworth sitting, his head resting against the back of the chair, and a smile on his face as if he were in a dream."

"Ah," I thought, "he had passed into the Presence Chamber."

"There could have been no suffering nor the least struggle. Close to him on the table were an empty glass and the burned-out lamp, and one hand was lying on a written paper, as if to point it out to whoever found him."

"Why, do you think he meant to kill himself ?" broke in Eleanor.

"Certainly not, in my opinion. But he knew he was running a serious risk in the interests of science, and had provided for the worst. The paper stated as much, and directed that if found unconscious on the second morning the doctor was to be summoned, and word sent to Susan and me."

Eleanor caught at my name. "Why to Susan ?" she said, and I saw the astonishment in her face.

"Because he gave Susan a packet to keep for him till the experiment

was over ; I suppose he did not like to trust it in the house. I do not feel quite satisfied about that Nursoo ; he seemed so alarmed when an inquest was talked about ; but perhaps he had only a vague notion of what it is. Poor fellow ! poor Redworth ! I wonder if he has any relatives who should be summoned ? I asked that Hindu, but he at once became more foreign than ever, and did not seem to know."

There was of course much curiosity about the packet, and I had over and over again to repeat the instructions I had with it. It was not till the Tuesday following that Dr. Carpenter came to the Rectory. "There is no doubt whatever now that death has taken place," he said to us. "For my own part I never believed in the possible catalepsy, and the condition of the corpse was such yesterday that I should have had no hesitation in examining ; but I have waited the security of another twenty-four hours. Now the remains will be confined immediately after the post-mortem ; and if there are, as I understand, certain sealed instructions, I would suggest they should be consulted without delay."

I was appealed to at once to deliver up my charge. My own wish would have been to open it first in private ; but I yielded to the evident expectation, and brought it down to where Gregory, Eleanor, and Dr. Carpenter sat in conclave. I remember it all so well,—the three expectant faces and the eager curiosity on Eleanor's—even the touch of the strong parchment wrapper and the bold handwriting of the address, and my own reluctance to face the necessity of breaking those seals, for I was grieved for my friend, as they called him. Let me here write him down my friend for the last time. The contents were simple enough ; the outer

cover bore my name only, and the inner one was thus inscribed :

If you have had need to open this, I shall be a dead man. Give these papers to Mr. Alleyne with the request that he will act as my executor ; it will not be a troublesome office, for little remains to be done. I wish my funeral to be as plain as possible, and it is of no concern to me where I am laid.

The signature followed this. Enclosed was a will of recent date, drawn out by a lawyer at Lynncaster, providing that all pictures and effects which were his property at Coldhope, with the exception of such as he had already disposed of by deed of gift, should be sold, and the residue, after paying funeral expenses and all proven claims, handed over to the Lynncaster Infirmary. There was no mention of any relative, or of property existing elsewhere. The other enclosure was the deed of gift referred to, which transferred to the Reverend Gregory Alleyne the entire furniture of the studio, including the carved shrine, the picture of the dead Christ, and all other pictures in the room, together with carpets and easel, "and whatever else it may contain at the time of my death as if enumerated." Two keys fastened together were folded in this paper, one being labelled *key of studio*, and the other *key of shrine*. A strip of paper fastened to the deed bore the following message :

It is my request that the Reverend Gregory Alleyne shall keep these keys in his own possession, and as soon as possible after receiving them shall himself in person go to the studio for the purpose of disconnecting from the stored batteries the electric wires which illuminate the shrine, as if ignorantly handled they may be dangerous. N.B. To open the shrine, press and slip to the right the central carved rose in upper border of panel, which will expose key-hole. The front of shrine opens outwards. To disconnect wires, unscrew and take out the metal knobs to



right and left of hinge. The shrine may then be moved without damage.—VICTOR REDWORTH.

Gregory was much affected by this bequest. "Poor fellow! poor Redworth!" he said again. "It was good of him to think of me. If ever I coveted anything that was my neighbour's, it was this very picture; and I would rather have it in remembrance of him than any other legacy. Of course I will act; and I shall write to these people at Lynncchester and tell them that Redworth sent me the will."

I went away with Eleanor, and left him and Dr. Carpenter together; but later in the morning he came to me, and I saw he had the keys in his hand with the paper of directions. "I am going up to Coldhope, Susan, and I want you to come with me. You are not likely to have any foolish fear of a house with death in it, and this affair of the wires should be seen to without delay."

I hope I have no foolish fear of death. In the course of my former work I had seen it in many forms; but I confess to a certain shrinking from the idea of entering Coldhope, knowing what I knew, I alone, of the mysterious nature of Mr. Redworth's end. But I said nothing of this to Gregory, and got ready quickly to accompany him; walking up through the deep shade of the wood-path, that green coolness of which Gregory had spoken the first day I entered it, and which was a pleasant refuge from the June sun. We crossed the park, saying little to each other: both of us, I fancy, were occupied with our own thoughts; but as we came in sight of the house with its drawn blinds a carriage was waiting at the door, and another drove up as we approached. Gregory uttered an exclamation. "I did not mean to fall in with that; but it can't be helped

now, we had better go on. That is Somers from Hillingford, who has come to help Carpenter with the examination."

A strange servant opened the door to us.

"Is Nursoo with the doctors?" asked my cousin. "Let him know I have Mr. Redworth's instructions to go up to the studio."

The man looked troubled; he had, we found after, been only a short time in the Coldhope household. "Nursoo is not here, sir," he said. "He told us last evening he was directed to fetch another doctor, and he went off just before nightfall, and has not returned."

Gregory said he knew the way and that we would go up alone, showing Mr. Redworth's signature to the strip of paper, but the servant made no demur. They had spoken under their breaths, and there was a ghastly hush about the darkened house; while on the close atmosphere there seemed,—or was it my fancy?—to be already a taint of death.

My cousin opened the door into the library, and I followed him in. There was a low murmur of voices from the adjoining room, and I shuddered when I thought of what lay there under the dissecting knife. The library itself was deserted: there was the great chair in which the dead man had sat smiling all through the passage of those hours; the lamp was still upon the table, and the empty glass which his hand had set down; but we did not linger over the suggestive scene. The laboratory was deserted also, littered in confusion and with the grate full of the ashes of burned paper. I noticed this as we passed to the door beyond, which Gregory unlocked, and then we entered the studio.

It was much as I had seen it last; but an unfinished picture stood upon the easel, and a palette with daubs of

dried paint lay beside it. The picture appeared to be a study for a mythological subject, Orpheus and Eurydice ; the greater part of it was only roughly sketched in charcoal, but the principal heads were painted in. In the Orpheus there was a shadow of the artist himself, while Barbara's eyes looked out at us from the face of the Eurydice. I recognised the train of thought which had inspired the sketch, and lingered before it till Gregory called me to assist him in opening the shrine.

The picture and the crucifix stood upon it as before, but no thin blue cloud of incense now floated up before the closed eyes of the dead Christ. Without the clue it would have been difficult to discover any means of opening the carved panel ; but following the written instructions Gregory turned the key and the whole panel moved outward and downward. As it opened, so bright a light shone out upon us that my eyes were for the moment too dazzled to look within ; but Gregory staggered back with a cry,—a call on God as in extremity—and then I saw !

Lying under the light, with one arm beneath her head as if asleep, and a faint smile on her parted lips was—Barbara !

## CHAPTER XII.

It is difficult to write connectedly of what followed. I thought Gregory would have fallen, and when he sank into a chair, I ran back to the laboratory for water. It was many minutes before he recovered sufficient mastery of himself to look again upon the sight, at once so beautiful and so awful, which the unclosing panel had revealed. Was it Barbara, or some perfection of effigy ? We could not tell ; and presently when he was calm

enough to be left, I went down stairs for Dr. Carpenter.

He came at once on my summons, and indeed his ministrations were needed for Gregory. He was able to pronounce that what the shrine enclosed was in truth all that was mortal of Barbara, though the remains were in so wonderful a state of preservation that it was impossible to judge when death had taken place. In this case at least the secret process had been completely successful, and that Barbara had been a victim to it there could be no doubt. What it was no documents remained to show ; with one notable exception all Mr. Redworth's papers had perished. When Dr. Carpenter and his colleague made full investigation later, they were of opinion that the large arteries had been gradually emptied of blood before life was extinct, and filled with a preservative fluid of some unknown nature. The entire surface of the skin had been anointed with some unguent, and where visible the complexion had been artificially tinted and the lips reddened ; elsewhere the body was of the hue of wax. The semblance of life was further aided by a rose-coloured medium through which the dazzling light fell upon it.

Of course the fuller examination was not made until the body was removed and transferred to a coffin ; and before I write of this and of the sad return home, I must record my memory of that first sight of her as laid at rest by the hands of her murderer. The attitude was natural, as if she slept, smiling in her sleep, her head pillowed on her arm, her face turned a little from us to the right shoulder, the eyes closed, though when the lids were lifted (greatest wonder of all !) they were still unglazed. Her left hand clasped some folded papers which were partly hidden by her dress. The dress itself

was magnificent, as if this madman who loved her had thought nothing too costly to lavish on the dead image of his love. It was fastened and brooched with jewels, a robe of white velvet which opened over embroideries of pearl and gold, while priceless folds of lace veiled her breast and were clasped with diamonds on either shoulder. Her dark hair was confined by a slender band of diamonds, above which were five points, each a great opal,—the same which had figured in the picture Mr. Redworth sent to Eleanor. Alas, now we knew the secret of the changed expression, and how it must have been painted, not from pretended recollection, but at the side of the dead girl; we knew also what a mockery the gift was to those who mourned her!

My heart faints within me as I go back to that summer day, the bewildering shock of discovery and the confusion that followed. Dr. Carpenter was afraid of the consequences to Gregory; he was utterly broken down, and it was long before we could tear him away from his dead daughter. He vowed he would not leave her remains under a roof which had been Redworth's; but at last he was made to see the impossibility of immediate removal, and consented to return to the Rectory and aid me in breaking the news to his wife.

It was an acute revival of the former sorrow. In this dread recovery Barbara was newly lost to them, and bitter indeed were their feelings towards the murderer who had passed beyond the reach of earthly justice. To their view it was all a studied revenge for his rejection, a revenge directed against daughter and parents alike; it was impossible for them to recognise that the deed might have been prompted by a very madness of love.

Much of the mystery of that crime

is beyond unravelment; the depth of Victor Redworth's guilt and the possibility of shaken intellect which might condone it, are known only to Him who is the judge of quick and dead. It was an agony to Gregory to think what Barbara might have suffered, and how her last hours might have been tortured and troubled; but when those folded papers were taken from her dead hand, the written particulars they contained were reassurance in that respect, at least to me. I do not think that the Alleynes ever believed the truth of the narrative; and it was perhaps only natural that they should fear and think the worst.

We restrained Eleanor from going to Coldhope, feeling it was better for her not to see the dead girl till she was placed in more natural surroundings, and brought to her home. Evans and I went there as soon as all was ready and the doctor's examination at an end; and between us we dressed her for the grave, till she looked once more her girlish self in the white nightdress closed to the throat, all her jewels and barbaric splendours put away. There was no stiffness or rigour about her limbs, and we folded her hands together on her breast as easily as with one newly dead. The double inquest was then over, and a warrant out for the arrest of the Hindu, who had disappeared the night before the discovery.

In Mr. Redworth's case the doctors could find no direct cause of death. There was no trace of poison and all the organs appeared to be healthy; the heart's action must have failed suddenly, but there was nothing to show why. Of course the general idea remained that he had killed himself fearing discovery; but his secret was not threatened, and had been disclosed by his own act. No clue was ever obtained to his former life; the lawyers at Lynnchester knew

nothing of him further than the instructions given for his will, in which there was no mention of any property beyond his possessions at Coldhope. The servants were equally ignorant; it seemed that Nursoo was the only one in whom he had placed confidence, and Nursoo had taken himself away. No relative came forward either at the time or later, and grave doubt remains whether the name of Redworth was not an assumption to conceal some other and notorious cognomen. His remains were removed in a plain hearse to Lynncchester under cover of night, and were interred in the town cemetery without religious service. The secrecy of the removal became necessary on account of the rage of popular opinion against the dead man, threats being uttered openly in Ditchborough of insult to be offered to the corpse, and of forcibly tearing it from the hearse. The tide had turned with all the country side, and their judgment on the real culprit became Janie's vindication.

Evans said, with a tear in her eye not wholly for her nursling, while that sad toilet was performing: "I am right down sorry, miss, for all I've said against Miss Janie and the hard thoughts I've had of her. It was true enough about my darling young lady being dead; but this was none of her doings, and I'd ask her pardon myself if she was here." The same sentiment found expression from other quarters. A few days later at the Rectory I was called down to speak to a Mrs. Murgatroyd, and found at the back-door the woman who had snatched the child out of Janie's arms during that memorable walk. She was curtsying and wiping her eyes: few people were dry-eyed about us just then; and I saw she held in the fold of her apron a small picture frame of rough carving. Her boy, she said, had cut it out with a knife, and she begged me to send it

to Miss Janie with their duty; "Maybe she'd like to have it where she is." I promised to send the message and the parcel; and then with more tears came out the history of what Janie had done for them in former days, and how they and all the village were hoping she would forgive them and come back.

There were crowds about the gates and along the road when Barbara's coffin was brought to the Rectory, and not one among the people but had put on some scrap of black as a token of mourning. The coffin had been closed for removal, but when laid in the drawing-room the lid was taken off again, and once more in her own home we could look on her sweet face before it was hidden away from us for ever. Everything of familiar use had been put away, and the room converted into a *chapelle ardente*, solemn with shaded windows and sweet with flowers which were sent in abundance from all quarters. It was here that Eleanor wept out her frantic grief, and Gregory despaired of remembering those lessons of forgiveness which it had been the profession of his life to teach. Truly this man had wronged them to the full measure of the seventy times seven.

On the night of the removal Gregory put into my hands the papers which had been taken from the shrine, and I sat up in my own room deciphering them in the stillness of the hushed house, with the dead girl lying below. They were leaves torn from a journal, the rest of which had evidently been destroyed; the irrelevant matter here and there had been scored through with a heavy hand, and in a different coloured ink. The first page was dateless and began abruptly, following an entry on another subject.

"I have seen G. A. to-day and taxed him with the rumour. I had

hoped up to the last that it was false, that my warning had not passed unheeded ; but his face acknowledged it before the words. I kept control of myself, even when he made a clumsy allusion to former hopes. I forced myself to smile in his obtuse countenance, and utter the customary felicitations and good wishes to the bride elect.

"I went back through the wood. I could have dashed my head against the trees, for I was mad with pain and horror. Barbara, my love, my darling ! That it should have come to this ! That you should have brought such a fate upon yourself and upon me who love you ; that you must die, and speedily, and by my hand !

"You know I did not spare to tell you. It is destiny ; from the foundations of all the worlds you were foredoomed to me and I to you. I cannot forego this even if I would. Even could I find the will to surrender you to your boy-lover, the tie between you two would bring nothing but misery and sin and shame. And misery and sin and shame shall never touch you, my love, my dearest, while I can stand in the way.

"If it were not for my knowledge of this inevitable end, I would give my life a willing ransom for yours. Anything, so that this cup might pass from me ; but it is not to be. For your sake, beloved, I must not know relenting ; I must save you from yourself.

"You knew it. I have not forgotten how I told you, nor that brief moment when I sealed our vow upon your lips. God may pardon those who have come between us,—God may spare them, but I cannot. They shall pay me pang for pang in sweat of anguish and despair of heart ; they shall plunge deep into the hell wherein I am dwelling now.

"I told you plainly when I told

you of my love, and I held your sweet eyes with mine, half frightened and half fascinated by what seemed to you so strange. I told you of the mysterious link which neither of us could ignore without sinning against our own natures ; a crime which would bring its Nemesis of utter woe. I set before you that it lay with you to elect whether that link should bind us together on earth, as well as in that mysterious future you could but dimly apprehend. I wished you to choose : whether you would for all your life keep your maiden distance and wrap yourself about with your shy pride and hold me aloof ; or whether you would own me for what I am,—lover, master, and husband,—now as well as for eternity. It was nothing that I had counted more than thrice your years : I knew I must survive you, for so it was written ; and in your youth I should be young. The choice was between a perpetual virginity and me for your mate : there could be no other ; and in the terrible event of infidelity I was bound to take your life. I might warn you twice if you were deviating from the right path ; but the third time would be death, at whatever cost of agony to me.

"God grant that you may heed the warnings, and that all may yet be well. I phrase this as a prayer ; it is a human instinct to resort to such expression in our bitterest needs. If truly I believed that prayer might aid, I could wear out the stones with my knees, and weary the inexorable patience of Heaven. But Heaven is dumb and deaf, and my own arm must achieve salvation, if salvation yet may be."

The first fragment ended with these words ; the second was dated on the 8th of November.

"Until to-day I have not seen Barbara, though I have twice been to



the Rectory. But to meet her in her own home would not serve my purpose; when others surround her the power I attempt to exercise is weakened and absorbed into a multiplicity of channels. It was necessary that I should draw her so that we could speak together,—I alone with her alone; to plead for the last time, not for any lover's grace, but that she would have pity on herself and me. I went to the tree under which we used to meet, and where now the leaves of another autumn are lying brown and sere on the sodden turf. There, where once I had awaited her in a paradise of love and hope, I willed her to come to me. I have power yet over the physical, though her fancy has turned from me, and I knew she would be drawn. I must wait till the influence found her alone, but the instant she was alone it would be sure.

"I waited there for nearly two hours, and then the throbbing of my heart told me I had succeeded. She was on her way; I felt her footsteps with some rarer sense than hearing. I knew the exact instant when her dark-robed figure would emerge from under the trees, approaching quickly, upright as a young Diana, her sketch-book in her hand just as she used to carry it. With the old summons I had recalled also that association of the past. I could see, as she drew near, that she walked like one in a dream. I went to meet her, but I was barely near enough to speak when another figure broke from the wood; the officious little companion who is full of perverse individuality for all her meek ways, and who has foiled me oftener than this once. 'Barbara,' she said, in the midst of quick pants for breath, for she had been running, 'Barbara, Aunt Eleanor wants you at once; you must come back. Have you forgotten that Madame Aldegonde

is sending to-day about the fitting-on, and there is barely time as it is between the trains?'

"If she had spoken only, Barbara would not have heeded her, but she slipped her hand within the arm of the other, and I could see the start of awakening,—the wave of altered expression, the anger which flashed into her face, though she did not betray herself. The anger was not for Janie Moorhouse; she clasped the hand that was on her arm and clung to it. By now I was at her side, and the usual courtesies were bound to pass between us; but I saw wrath in her darkened eye and curled lip; she knew what I had done. 'I will come home,' she said; 'I had forgotten. No, I don't know what I meant to sketch; it was just an impulse; I had no real wish.'

"'I wanted to speak to you,' I said, turning to walk beside them. 'I am loth to lose the opportunity of this chance meeting.' I emphasised the last words, and met the indignation of her look unmoved. 'Do you remember,' I went on, 'something I once told you almost in this very spot? I want to know you recollect it. Give me that assurance.'

"There was no room for pleading; no pleading would move her now, and her spirit seemed too high even for fear. Not even the evidence just given of my power over her could make her afraid. 'You told me many strange things,' she said haughtily. 'I neither regarded them at the time, nor can I remember them now.'

"'I think you must be able to recall this, for it related to yourself, and to a contingency that has now arisen which renders it needful for me to remind you. If you are really in ignorance I will repeat it. Miss Moorhouse will oblige me by passing on; I shall detain you only a moment.'

"I doubt if the companion would

have obeyed the dismissal, but as it was Barbara made it impossible; I saw her grip tighten on the girl's hand. 'The repetition is unnecessary,' she said. 'It could make no difference, and I will not hear.'

" 'That is your last word?'

"She made a gesture of assent; there was no softening about her, no pity for me or misgiving for herself. All I could do was to attempt to warn her of her fate. We were walking down through the wood-path which was too narrow for three, and I was close at her side; so close that her dress touched me, but still she clung to Janie, and my power was baffled. The gate had come in view. 'I will send you a reminder,' I said very low, breathing the words into her reluctant ear. 'You may take it as a wedding-gift.'

"She did not answer. I do not think Janie heard, though I had seen her look curiously and apprehensively from one to the other of us; I suppose the few words we had exchanged aloud had sounded strange. I held the gate open for both the girls, and they passed through.

"I had failed; and I knew to my cost how surely the closing of that gate behind them shut out hope. That was some hours ago. I have been sitting here over the fire. I have warmed myself with food and, contrary to my habit, with wine: I have filled this page with writing; and now a new feeling is astir. The impossible is fast merging into the possible; is the transmutation due to the glow of anger in her eyes, the haughty defiance of her air? So long as she lives this pain will consume me, this anguish of a baffled passion. When I have fulfilled the dire necessity which lies before me, will not a chill hand be laid upon my fever and leave me healed and strong, able once again to strive as I have striven

heretofore for the good of my fellow-men? Will not the goal of ambition shine before me with its former lustre when once her distracting influence is withdrawn?

"Yes, she must die. I will kill her and my agony together. Life shall be as it was before I found her, and for the dim future I will hold only the dim hope.

"*November 11th.* I stand aghast at the change in myself. I revolted in desperation before from the pressure of inevitable fate. Now I not only feel that I am forced to kill her, but that I am willing. Her death alone can release me from this torture, and I am driven, in despite of myself, to long for it.

"*November 12th.* I am supposed to be studying. I sit for hours with a book open on my knees, and Nursoo creeps in on tip-toe with his tray; but I have not read a line. The study before me is a rehearsal of my task; how I am to do it, where I am to do it, when I am to do it, are the real problems for solution. She must not suffer, not a pang that I can spare her, not even terror; that I could not bear. And it is just that I wait till the very last to strike the blow, so that there may be room for repentance should her heart fail her, or should it return to me. Yet another consideration; if I am to be free henceforth to compass that which I projected in the future, I must lay myself open to no clumsy suspicions. For myself I care little; but for the sake of my work there must be no blunder which would set me in the dock.

"*November 18th.* It flashed upon me to-day like a revelation. Have I been stone blind that I did not see the direction of it earlier? I know now how she must needs die, by a

death which instead of destroying her beauty will preserve it for ever in my sight. No coffin-lid shall hide her from me; the face I have loved will henceforward be mine to look on when I will. Strange that the crisis of my life should be two-fold; strange that through this anguish I should attain my triumph!

“*November 30th.* I have schooled myself to go again to the Rectory; it is needful I should appear on friendly terms with all the inmates. Also it is needful I should thoroughly acquaint myself with all that is passing under that roof, for such knowledge may be of service when the end comes. Of my own unaided observation this would be impossible, but by the help of a simple instrument I can maintain an espionage far completer than through the eye of a confederate. I have by nature a measure of crystal seership, though its use has for long been in abeyance; and whenever it suits me I can set up the mystic oval, and call into it whom I will. It is not the first time I have used it for vision at a distance, but for me the stone is a Sadducee; it shows me neither angel nor spirit. But neither angel nor spirit would serve my present purpose; enough that it will show me Barbara and those who surround her, and the scenes among which she moves. And it is useful not only as a reflector of events, but as a study of character. Each actor brings with him an indicative sphere of his own; I know most of them as well and as much as if I were one with their hearts and counted every pulse. I know that worldly old woman Eleanor Alleyne; the motives that sway her, the whole budget of her fondnesses and prejudices. I know all her pride in her child and the ambitions she entertains for her. I know the severity with which my

blow will fall. I have taken the measure of this boy-lover, and of Barbara's liking for him; it is liking only,—*bonne camaraderie*, no love, no passion, not even the girlish romance which I was able to awake. But though not by her he is beloved by another; by my little marplot, my puny adversary, whom I have but to put out my hand to crush, as I shall crush her. It shall not be for her advantage that Barbara is swept from her path.

“The stone has shown me one thing which brought back a pale after-glow of the hope which set in darkness: Barbara is afraid; afraid of the power I can exercise; though, full of young life as she is, death seems an impossible chance, death at my hand a hypothesis yet more remote. She will never be alone if she can help it; she will not cross the threshold unless the others are with her. She shares Janie's bed; the crystal mirrors two faces on its pillows; the one girl sleeping tranquilly secure in companionship, while the other wakes and weeps. After all, will she heed the warning? Will she draw back while yet there is time? Alas, no! Because I do not strike she begins to think I cannot; that the defences of her home are strong against me, that her lover's arms will be an abiding shelter. That flitting ghost of a hope will vanish like its fairer kindred; the blow must fall.

“*December 5th.* I have sent my wedding-gift, an unsheathed dagger. She cannot be so ignorant of the language of symbol as to misunderstand. I saw her pale in the crystal as she held it in her hand, and then the cloud covered her and the stone would show no more.

“*December 9th.* I am arranging for an absence shortly before the

wedding. I shall depart from the local station with all publicity, leaving my horse at the inn as I have done before; and it will be easy to return to Coldhope under cover of night, and re-enter my private rooms without the knowledge of the household. They are never entered in my absence except by Nursoo; it may be needful to admit him to a measure of confidence but I run a minimum of risk in so doing, as he is in my power and dares not be other than faithful. All is in readiness. Am I wrong in feeling so sure of myself as I do, and of the steady nerve which alone can insure success? I think not; I see no room for failure in the measures I shall use, provided only I can trust that nerve at the crisis. But suppose failure; suppose the day comes and finds me baffled; what then? Why, direct violent means which are always available if the finer strategy breaks down. Whether or not I am an invited guest, I can await the bride at the church-door; their 'friend' would surely have a right to see the show, when all the village will be there to gape on her satins and her beauty. Then a sure shot for her and another for myself from the revolver I have handy, and all would be over for us both. Vulgar and theatrical possibly,—a paragraph of horrors for the paper; but perhaps a better ending than the other, and an easier one for me.

“*December 17th.* I am full of power and confidence. I have never felt this so strong within me as now, when it is the agent of destruction. I set out on my supposed journey to-day and return after midnight.

“*December 18th.* The day has come and the hour. I am barred off from the rest of the house, and the lights here and in the laboratory (where that

ghastly table is ready set) are closely screened from without by oak shutters and drawn curtains. The wing looks as dark to outside view as if I were really away as is supposed. But the side door on to the park is on the latch; the crystal is before me and the effort has begun.

“I desire to note here all the stages through which that effort must pass, that I may possess a written record for reference hereafter. I am sitting under the lamp, in sight of the door by which I have willed that she shall enter. In the middle of the room on a table is the glass from which she will drink, and beside it the cushioned chair in which she will sink for her last sleep. Not a finger of mine will touch her till the end is sure.

“*Eight o'clock,* and I turn to the crystal. She is sitting at dinner. The lover is there, and Janie Moorhouse full of her trouble, the parents, and a stranger guest who does not concern me; I see her only as a shadow, for my attention is riveted elsewhere. The spell begins to work upon Barbara. She is surrounded by a dreamy influence, nothing more as yet; she begins to yield to it insensibly. I wait for the moment when she will be alone. I want to draw her out through the study entrance; that side of the house is dark and unwatched. The danger is that she may be immediately missed and followed.

“*Nine o'clock.* She is in the study; the drawing thither has been stronger than I supposed, for it is operating earlier. She has some keys in her hand and is unlocking a bureau. That was not in my programme. I have arrested her attention; she feels at last the impulse of the direct summons, the call from without. I see her unbarring the window,—now the door,—now,—oh, my heart, my heart!—she has stepped out into the night. The night is dark, but in my know-

ledge of the path she walks secure as if in full day. She has passed into the wood. Every fibre of my being feels her approach and yearns towards her—commanding, drawing her. Success is certain: the stone shows an undisturbed house; the circle in the drawing-room still ignorant,—that little fool breaking her heart in her attic,—the servants gathered at supper; there is no alarm as yet. She is near. The park is in solitude; no eye has marked her coming. Her step is at the door.

“*Nine thirty-five.* She enters, slowly, like one unwilling; but with mechanical precision secures the heavy bolts behind her, and comes forward through the dimness of the ante-room into the light. Will the shock of strange surroundings break her trance? Must there after all be violence to ruffle the plumage of my trapped bird? The cold and fog of which she has been unconscious have laid a frosting finger on her hair; her brow knits with a puzzled expression for a moment, and then the dreamy peace returns. She moves forward to the table,—she pauses there,—and then her hand steals out for the glass. If her eyes meet mine in this supreme moment I am undone. At any risk,—at any cost,—I shall dash it from her lips. Will she drink or not? She waits, she holds it poised. I have no will now; I am powerless; it is all horror. Heavens eternal, it is at her lips, she drinks! It is a deep draught; the glass falls from her relaxing fingers and crashes empty on the floor. She has left no drop for me! The numbing effect seem immediate; she glances at the chair I have set,—moves feebly towards it,—sinks inert upon the cushions. Her eyes are closed,—it is irrevocable,—what have I done?

“I let the pen fall here. I thought my eyes were sealed from tears, but I

have been weeping over her—my love, my darling! I would not touch her in her death-trance except with reverence, and her lips are sacred; but I have kissed her hands and the border of her dress.

“There is much yet to be done before her heart ceases to beat, and my nerve must not fail. No corruption must pass upon her: I can spare her at least that dishonour; and there will be no suffering, barely the appearance of it. I must put this aside and carry her up to the laboratory.

“*Five hours later.* All is over, and she lay and smiled as if she were dreaming till her breath fluttered fainter and fainter, her heart beat slower and slower. I look at my own face gray in the glass, and I say to myself with vague reiteration, the words beating upon a frozen brain, ‘She is dead,—she is dead,—she is dead!’ But I cannot believe it yet. I have hidden my treasure where discovery is next to impossible. I have yet to efface every vestige of the operation, for I must be away before the dawn, and——”

Here the manuscript ended abruptly with the foot of the last page, and this was all we ever knew of the tragedy at Coldhope.

For nine days Barbara lay in her open coffin unchanged as some piece of exquisite sculpture: and so she lies now, I doubt not, below the turf of Ditchborough churchyard where the shadow of her white cross falls aslant with every western sun. Dick Sudeleigh came for a last look, and was among the train of mourners at the sad funeral which followed, utterly unnerved for all his young manhood. I thought of the last conversation we had had at the Rectory and his avowal about Janie; and I confess I was



curious to know if he had seen her in London and how matters stood between them. It may not be out of place if, before turning the final page of this true history, I narrate how my curiosity was satisfied.

Janie was not with us through that sad time. She wrote begging us to expect her for the funeral, but before the day fixed a letter came from the Sister Superior to say she had fallen ill,—it was thought from the shock—and the doctor forbade her to travel. It was addressed to me, and enclosed a pencil-scrrawl written from her bed, full of grief and anxious questions about Gregory and Eleanor. There was no mention in it of Dick or inquiry if he were with us; and the thought flashed into my mind as I read that perhaps she knew.

It was the evening of the funeral; the blinds were drawn up at the Rectory for the first time for many days, and an exhausted hush had fallen on the house, a hush of relief from the long strain of painful excitement. Gregory was sitting by his wife's couch,—she had fallen asleep with her hand in his; and I took the opportunity to steal out to the churchyard with a white wreath to add to the mass of flowers covering the fresh-heaped earth of the grave: it was one from a distance, which had come too late to lay on the coffin.

Dick was loitering under the trees in disconsolate fashion with a cigar; when he saw my errand he followed me, and we both stood looking down in silence on the spot where Barbara lay. The heavy scent of tuberose and lily breathed about it in the still air, the June sky canopied above it in absolute peace. At last, at last she had come home, and we could think of her as soothed into that blessedness of rest which is the guerdon of the happy dead. There would be no wandering footsteps at the Rectory

any more, I thought, as I laid the fair white coronal over those coffined feet which were set towards the dawn.

Dick said huskily as we turned away: "You have not forgotten, Miss Varney, what I told you when I was last here?"

"About Janie? No."

"It would be *her* wish,—I am sure of it,—that I should take care of Janie, and make up to her, if she will let me, for all she has suffered. This has been a terrible blow for all concerned, but it has come harder on her, in a way, than on the rest of us."

"Poor Janie!" I said. "I am sorry she was not with us to-day."

"Perhaps it is as well. I could hardly have seen her without speaking, and I know she will not hear me yet. You know I went to her in London; did she tell you?"

"No."

"I begged her to take me. I was almost beside myself, but she was as firm as a little flint. I could not move her. Then I asked for a reason: I suppose I was coxcomb enough to think there must be one other than indifference; and then it all came out. She would not be my wife, or any man's, while there was a breath of suspicion against her; she must be cleared first, as she is cleared now."

"Yes," I said, "she is cleared now."

"I asked what could it matter about anything so irrational; why should the senseless chatter of a pack of village fools come between her and me? And then she told me. She was suspected because she loved me, because she was known to have been jealous of Barbara. 'And therefore I never will,' she said to me, 'as long as there is a shadow of mystery remaining. I could not bear it, either for myself or you.' There was no turning her from that point."

"I think she was right. I am glad of it."

"I told her if I left her then, it would be only to hunt up the true facts of the case, and then I should come back for my reward. I little thought how strangely the discovery would come about, and through no act of mine."

We were in the garden again, pacing the walk as we did the former time. "Did she promise you conditionally?" I asked.

"No. She told me to go away and forget her; that it was all impossible. She had chosen her work, she said, and I must remember mine, and marry to please my mother,—and stuff of that sort. But now I am going back."

"At once?"

"Perhaps not straight from here I would show every respect to that

new-made grave, though it was dug in reality months ago, as you know. I shall write to her, and then as soon as she will consent to receive me I shall go. She will take me, I think, and forgive me that I loved another first, and that I cannot wholly forget Barbara,—even for her."

She did take him. The sorrow of which I have tried to write lies deep in the hearts of the Alleynes, never to be forgotten. It might be thought that the solemnity of such a woe would hold one's soul indifferent to the smaller pricks of fate; but I am not sure whether sometimes the lesser pang is not uppermost in Eleanor's bosom, when chance brings a reminder that after all it is Janie who is installed as mistress at Leigh Hall, and who is the happy mother of young Sir Richard Sudeleigh's heir.

THE END.

## SOME MORE RECOLLECTIONS OF JOWETT.

SINCE Newman joined the Church of Rome there has probably been no figure in University life which has taken the public eye so much as that of the late Master of Balliol. In part this was naturally due to the place he filled as head of what he himself had no small share in making the most famous intellectual school in England ; in part to the bold relief in which he stood out from the background of august nonentities as the typical representative of much that was best and worthiest in the old Oxford that was passing away around him. But it can hardly be doubted that most of his fame had its root in his own remarkable personality ; and during the last two years his friends and pupils have not been backward in placing upon record their reminiscences of so uncommon and picturesque a figure. We know him as University reformer, as tutor and Master of his college, as philosopher, scholar, host, and wit ; and it must be confessed that in each capacity he shines with no common brilliance.

Yet one or two reflections on this striking personality we propose to take the liberty of offering. In the first place one cannot help noticing that the most important portrait of all, that of Jowett as Master of his college, has in most instances been thrust completely into the background. And secondly, the very fact that the portraits are the work, as they almost invariably are, of close personal friends, makes it all but impossible to doubt that the enthusiasm which prompted them, as well as the prestige which attached to the Master in his

other capacities, have resulted in producing a figure which in several respects differs from the Jowett of the ordinary undergraduate's acquaintance. Be that as it may, there would certainly seem room for an effort to sketch, if it be only in the barest outline, such of the many sides of the late Master of Balliol's character as appeared most prominent to one of those undergraduates of the college who had not the good fortune to have been admitted to any of the various concentric circles of intimates, friends, and enthusiastic pupils, who practically composed his college acquaintance.

The ideal Head of a College has, one may suppose, still to be discovered. But we prophesy that, when he is found, there will be at least three great functions that he will regard as his primary duties. In the first place, apart from his routine work as Head of a Corporation of more or less importance, the supervision, that is to say, of its finance and management, apart too from his general oversight of the undergraduates' studies, he will make it part of his business to know at least something of all the men for whose general training he is responsible. Secondly, he will strive to utilise that knowledge in moulding and influencing for good the characters of the one or two hundred lads who are placed under his charge, and the great majority of whom are in a perfectly plastic state. And thirdly, he will endeavour to fulfil the same office to the college as a whole, seeking to make it not merely a great place of letters and learning, but a

force the influence of which, for truth and honour and righteousness, may be felt so far as possible in every grade of English society.

It may well have been that such conditions would not and did not all approve themselves to a man of Jowett's views. They would, of course, have been regarded as self-evident absurdities by those very great men to whom the Headship of a College meant a good house and a satisfactory income upon which to edit some forgotten classic, and who had about as much influence upon, or interest in, the successive generation of young lives which passed through the college as the wall has upon the shadows that cross it. But if the points in question are to be regarded as in any sense standards of success or failure in such a position, in two of the three Jowett failed. Of course the failure was only comparative, and, by contrast with the historic Heads aforesaid, no failure at all. Presumably Jowett did not try to succeed in these directions; he felt that such success was for a man of so many parts almost impossible. Perhaps the old traditions weighted him more than he himself or any one else was aware. At any rate the methods he adopted placed success in at least the two first directions out of the question. Of a certain number of undergraduates, the scholars, exhibitioners, and a few others, he saw a good deal; they often breakfasted with him, and, we heard, went through painful but bracing ordeals of essay reading and discussion over a glass of port during the Master's after-dinner hour. The principles on which the circle was made up were always more or less of a puzzle to us. It was said by the irreverent that if a man were a peer, a profligate, or a pauper the Master would be sure to take him up; and one sees now the reason that

underlay such a method of selection; the physician applying himself to those that were sick. But as undergraduates, a good many men could not help resenting the rather odd way in which one man was taken and another left; and they resented still more the extraordinary character of some of the personages who found their way into the college upon grounds that were certainly not connected with either intellect or industry, and who might hope, if they could be induced to do a little work, to look forward to the possible attainment of a third class. In all perhaps one-third of the college<sup>1</sup> thus saw something of the Master in private life; the residue were only directly touched by his influence at three points; in chapel, at the brief interview in hall at the end of each term, known respectively to dons and undergraduates as Collections or Hand-shaking; and those still more unpleasant quarters of an hour when one was summoned before the Master for some offence whose enormity transcended the judicial powers of the Deans.

Doubtless of these three occasions the sermons were the most important; and Jowett's opportunities in the pulpit were no common ones. The college chapel unfortunately is small, none too large indeed for the members of the society, almost the whole of whom used, in the writer's time, to attend on the afternoons when the Master preached; while the visitors, who on such occasions found their way into Balliol in somewhat inconvenient numbers, had to make the best they could of an array of forms and benches disposed in any vacant spaces there might be in the aisle or chancel of the chapel. Frequently, of course, it proved

<sup>1</sup> This and similar estimates must necessarily be based on little more than a rough impression, and therefore must not be implicitly relied upon.

impossible to find seats for every one. Surely no one who has been present at one of these Sunday afternoon services can ever forget the scene. The dark little chapel, densely crowded; the press of visitors along the aisle or close up to the very communion-table, so closely packed indeed that sometimes it was no easy matter for the Master to pick his way through to the pulpit; the stillness and silence, we may say the reverence of the massed rows of undergraduates; the faint light of the candles, with which the chapel was somewhat inadequately provided, gradually gaining in apparent strength as the daylight of the winter afternoon faded; the delicate silvery piping tones in which the sermon was delivered, frequently raised to a positive shrillness at the emphatic words of a telling passage, usually rising in pitch and emphasis at the close of a long sentence; the peculiar delivery, in detached jerky sentences, with glances over the chapel between each; the invariable or all but invariable interruption of the sermon towards its close by the harsh clang of the dinner-bell,—all this makes a memory which is not easily effaced. Intellectually the sermons were to most men a deep pleasure; the perfection of their style, the daring little epigrams, the quaint and happy conceits embedded in them, added to the charm of manner peculiar to the preacher, could not and did not fail to fascinate his hearers. But for all that, one had to confess that perfect intellectual exercises as the sermons might be, there was little in them calculated to make a deep impression upon a young man. The great majority, at all events, always struck one as being ideal moral or biographical essays which might be delivered with much acceptance, as the Nonconformists say, to any highly educated audience anywhere; and one had at times to allow a sneaking preference for the

stronger meat of the evening preachers at one or other of the churches.

Jowett's personal intercourse with the ordinary undergraduate was confined, as has been remarked, practically to two occasions, the terminal Collections, and the judicial proceedings in his study. On each Saturday morning, it is true, there was a third meeting of a kind, when the weekly battells,—that is to say, the account of the kitchen and buttery expenses for the week—were handed to us by the Master; but as in nineteen cases out of twenty no remark was made, we may leave this out from the list of interviews. To most of us, as we look back, the Master's attitude at Collections must be a subject for bewilderment and amazement to the end of our lives. So much, one feels, depended, so much might have come from that meeting, the Master's one chance, so to speak, when he and our tutors together reviewed or were supposed to review our progress during the term. A few, a very few, sensible sentences of approbation, or a few equally plain words of common sense might have made, would have made, such an enormous difference to us. The Master could speak, and upon occasion did speak, with a refreshing frankness which left nothing to be desired. But such an utterance was certainly the exception. In all ordinary instances something very different took place. One hung round the quadrangle or lounged on the forms at the lower end of the room in a state of more or less uneasiness, until one's name, in the shrill tones of the Master, resounded dismally loud in the empty hall. It was small wonder that we were uneasy, for it was by no means possible to predict what character the Master's comments would assume. They might, and they often did, take the form of crushing sarcasms. "The College, Mr. X., thinks highly of you, perhaps



too highly ; but not half so highly, I am sure, as you think of yourself," is a sample which the writer believes to have been true, and which if not true is no unfair specimen of what passed on some of these occasions. Such criticism was doubtless healthy but scarcely pleasant, as one sat in extreme discomfort on the edge of the chair in front of the Presence, a position both of body and mind not well suited to the appreciation of wit. More often still the Master's criticisms were represented by long flashes of painful silence as he stared at one sorrowfully over his glasses, while one's tutor at his side did his best to diminish the icy chill of this prolonged aphasia by a few words of kindly moderation ; until the affair was closed by the Master suddenly whipping out some kind of an oracular saying, the precise bearing of which on the questions at issue was apt to pass the wit of undergraduate to discover. Sometimes, indeed, it may be questioned whether the point was discoverable by any one. And some of the comments certainly struck one as more suitable both in form and substance for delivery to a third-standard schoolboy than to an undergraduate. There were cases, and surely not a few cases, where the undergraduate, always in a considerable amount of anxiety about the Schools, simply hungered for a few strong and kind words which, to put it mildly, were not forthcoming. For example, was it particularly inspiring, at the end of a term of hard work ending in a first class in the college examination, to hear, after a lengthy survey of one's person, as if one was some rare animal : "Mr. A is an intelligent young man, is he not, Mr. Y ?" Such an observation upon an occasion so solemn to the student could only strike one as supremely ridiculous. One may be permitted to doubt whether ridi-

cule is the ideal issue of an interview with the Master of a college ; one cannot doubt that it was a result which was frequently attained at Balliol. It is true, of course, that scores of smart sayings, purporting to have come into being at these interviews, have been fathered upon Jowett, though he was in no way responsible for their paternity. But in any case there was in the Master's attitude upon these occasions something that jarred very unpleasantly on one's ideas of what a Master should say and do. And apart from that there was a certain want of what we may term propriety in displays of satire on such occasions. Collections are certainly not an appropriate moment for these intellectual fireworks ; and in addition one seriously doubts whether admonitions in this form ever made more than a transient impression upon their subject. For unhappily it was not merely at Collections that these peculiarities of manner and diction attached to the Master's utterances. He did not seem, except in extreme cases, to possess the faculty of saying a few plain words in a plain way to an offender. When anything was said, though it would be foolish to lay too much stress on a generalisation from the limited number of instances which were all that could come under an ordinary undergraduate's notice, it is useless to conceal the fact that too often it was the comic features of the interview which impressed themselves on the delinquent ; and what might have altered a career became simply another good story to retail to the college.

From what has been said it will be readily understood that to the average undergraduate, who had not the good fortune to have been admitted to the inner circle, and whose relations with the Master, save possibly for a stray meal in the course of his four years,

were necessarily limited to the three occasions aforesaid, the making of the Master's acquaintance was apt to be a most unpleasant piece of disillusionment. The fame of the great man had been steadily dinned into the lad's ears alike by schoolmaster and parent. He probably regarded himself as being decidedly fortunate in being under the shadow of so great a reputation, as having become a member of so famous a college, his views thus varying inversely from those of the average Balliol scholar. The chances were that he had come, in the writer's time at least two thirds of the college did come, from a public school, and necessarily from a position in that school which had brought him into close and constant contact with the headmaster, with a man, that is to say, who was in five cases out of six of a vigorous and commanding personality, usually of a contagious and generous enthusiasm. It would be difficult to imagine a more complete wet blanket upon a lad's tendencies to hero-worship than his first interview with his new Head. He found himself in the presence of a man whose manner and speech, as well as his appearance and dress, though one does not want to dwell upon personal peculiarities, fell painfully short of any idea the freshman might have formed of the Head of a great college. Nor as time went on did the Master to the average man improve much upon acquaintance. One could not help feeling that there was something, one scarcely knew what, strangely lacking in him. It need hardly be said that it was not kindness of heart, nor yet knowledge of character, nor yet common sense. Was it that he was so wrapped up in the success and training of his really able pupils, that he had neither time nor inclination to take the average undergraduate seriously? Was it

that his natural tendency to satire had in its development destroyed his power of appealing to the finer instincts of men except in special circumstances? Did he affect affectation as a kind of screen to his real sentiments; or had the habit of these intellectual gambols before an admiring audience so grown upon him that he could not cut himself free from his mannerisms? Whatever was the cause, these eccentricities of diction and address impaired his direct influence most seriously, much more seriously one is sure than either he or his friends were aware. One doubts if it would have occurred to any one outside the immediate circle of his college acquaintance to apply to the Master in any trouble or perplexity, unless the inquirer were exceptionally free from any tendency to nervousness, or his difficulties were of unusual magnitude. And one fears that a good many men would have stated their opinion of the Master in terms of much force and little politeness.

In the aggregate, and apart from the results on the rank and file, Jowett's success at Balliol was doubtless something phenomenal, and marked in its way an epoch in University development. The intellectual standing of the college, its triumphs in the Schools, side by side with its high position in athletics (it was head of the river in 1873 and 1879), the crush to obtain admission, the many men of lofty motive and high ideal among its members, made altogether a record which no college in Oxford could attempt for a moment to rival. Doubtless, too, the success both at the University and in after-life of certain of the Master's pupils was something entirely without parallel, at any rate since the days of the Oriel teapot.

On the other hand it must be remembered that he had, outside and

beyond all competition, absolutely the first choice of the ablest scholars in the University, and many of these would have pushed their way to the front under the most incompetent tutors in Oxford. And if one looks at the plain records of the Schools, one is forced to doubt whether the success of Jowett's pupils as an entire class was so pronounced as is commonly supposed. Certainly in the writer's time some proportion of them, not of course a large proportion but in the circumstances a remarkable one, not only did not succeed, but so far as Oxford was concerned positively and emphatically failed. For failure in such circumstances there could of course be only one cause,—idleness; and in spite of the Master's alleged powers of making men work, he was no more free from idle pupils than any other tutor. It is impossible to avoid the thought that in many of these cases of wasted abilities the Master's system simply aggravated the disease it was intended to cure, and increased the conceit which already bade fair to ruin a career. But even if every one of these pupils had turned out brilliantly successful, nothing could have been more unsatisfactory and unfair than such a test. In strict truth the success of Jowett, or of any other Head of an educational foundation, will not depend upon his own reputation, nor yet on the remarkable results attained by picked pupils, nor yet altogether on the standing of the college, but upon the results produced in the case of the average man who was not a genius and never would be, but was as well worth attention as a good many of the erratic prodigies who were to set the Thames on fire. And how far in these respects Jowett's headship was successful, one must be permitted to doubt.

Not that the undergraduate failed

to appreciate at least some sides of the Master's character. We gloried in his intellectual triumphs, in the success of his books, in his thousand and one witty sayings, a growing body of which, doubtless mainly consisting of glosses and accretions, was handed down by college tradition, in the cheerful hatred with which he was said to be regarded by other University personages, in the constant stream of distinguished visitors to the Master's lodge. We accepted cordially, as indirect evidence of his influence, the sincere dislike with which Balliol men in general were regarded by the University. At least some of us revered, and deeply revered, the simplicity and industry of the old man's life. In a sense one loved him; but unhappily it was the sense in which one loved the bishop of one's diocese; it was not that intense feeling of personal loyalty which more than a few English headmasters have had the power of evoking among hundreds of their scholars, and which was certainly accorded to Jowett by his personal pupils. And yet one is afraid that a great many of us never realised until too late the intense goodness of the Master's character. We allowed our eyes to be caught by the foibles of which, after all, few fine characters are entirely devoid, missed altogether the moral of his teaching and his life, and took our degrees regarding the Master as an excellent joke.

It was not solely himself, nor yet his system which was responsible for his failure, such as it was. Looking over the records of his Mastership, one can hardly avoid the reflection that, in some senses he failed, some of the want of success was due to the extravagance of many of his disciples. His very environment of incipient Boswells was enough of itself to have spoiled the usefulness of any one but a man of

exceptional force of character. Nothing strikes one more strongly, in reading the accounts of his life, than the utter triviality of many of the remarks and discussions which have been hoarded up by various admirers. They appear to have taken it as an axiom that nothing that fell from the Master's lips was unworthy of record. Such a disorder is not unknown in other academic circles, but it assumed an exceptionally severe form in Balliol. Even more opposed to a successful headship, at all events from the present point of view, was the bent of Jowett's mind. It appeared to the average undergraduate as always philosophic rather than practical, as too apt to dwell at length upon the precise difference between Tweedledum and Tweedledee: and if the friends who enjoyed his close intimacy were constantly at a loss to understand whether the Master was serious or not, on what points he was serious, and if upon some he was serious at all, what hope was there for the average undergraduate to arrive at any conclusion upon the

subject? Was it then to be wondered at that he should fasten on the less solid features of the Master's character and draw from them a one-sided and unfair picture? Indirectly, no doubt, the moral elevation of his character, the purity of his motives, his tolerance and abounding charity, could not but have influenced us far more deeply than we realised. It was impossible for any thoughtful man, however violently he might disagree with the Master's views on any particular point, to leave the college without carrying away some reflections of the spirit of its Head, without feeling himself the better even for the very indirect contact with so pure a life. But unhappily not every undergraduate, even at Balliol, is thoughtful; and even such an influence, added to his reputation in all the half-dozen different spheres in which he shone, and to the fascination which he himself exercised over his immediate pupils, is by no means all that one might have hoped would have been exercised by the Master of such a college as Balliol.

## THE ANNIVERSARY IN BERLIN.

EXACTLY twenty-five years have gone by since the Constitution of the German Empire was proclaimed in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles. The event was one of the most momentous in the history of modern Europe, and the celebration of its anniversary which has just been witnessed in Berlin, suggests many subjects for reflection. Two questions stand out pre-eminent; what, in the first place, is the meaning and significance of the unity of Germany which in 1871 was finally accomplished; and secondly, what are the events which have characterised in any special manner the first twenty-five years of the history of the Empire?

The significance of the unity of Germany may be said to lie in this, that the name, like that of Italy, is no longer merely a geographical expression. It now means much more than a territorial portion of the surface of the earth; it signifies a Nation. Formerly Germany consisted of a number of independent States, whose relations towards one another varied greatly. Some were on terms of more or less intimate alliance; others were rivals, and even occasionally hostile; the boundaries of all were ill-defined, and kept shifting as the sands. Two States, and two only, arose to eminence as Powers, the Kingdom of Prussia in the north, and that of the Austrian Empire in the south. The Emperor of Austria indeed held a titular pre-eminence as the Chief of the Holy Roman Empire; but the reality had long ago departed, and when in 1806 the title was finally abandoned, it was seen that

nothing was surrendered but a shadow. Prussia had been famous under the leadership of Frederick the Great, but her pride had been humbled by Napoleon in the dust; and it was during the Napoleonic era that the nadir of German history was reached. After 1815 Prussia regained some portion of her strength, but the German people as a whole lay enfeebled and depressed. It was only natural that the more ardent patriots should have longed for a better state of things, and yearned to see the day when Germany should take her rightful place among the nations of the earth. With a curious lack of self-reliance the Germans seem to have been content up to this time to rest upon foreigners for initiation and support. As Goethe said, a German could not buckle on his shoes without calling in a foreigner to help him. This self-depreciation descended even to their language. The mighty Frederick boasted that he had in his youth not read a single German book, and to the end of his life he could never speak the language well. The German people had yet to learn the lesson which Goethe strove to teach them: "Trust yourselves, and then others will trust you." Gradually, however, the national spirit increased in strength and volume; the long night was coming to a close, and the new dawn of a full and glorious life was drawing near. The patriotic songs of Arndt and Körner set German hearts on fire. Then came the Zollverein or Customs Union, which, though merely a commercial union, clearly pointed out the way. Next followed the two Conventions which sat at Frank-



fort and Erfurt respectively in 1848 and 1850 to devise a Federal Constitution. Their efforts proved abortive, and it was not until 1866 that with the defeat of Austria the North German Confederation was able to be formed. That Confederation was the basis of the edifice of which the Empire is the roof and crown.

This, then, is what the German Empire really means; it is nothing less than the union of all the German races, putting Austria aside, for within the limits of the Empire Prussia and Austria could not co-exist. An alliance between them, such as that which is now actually in force, was all that could be hoped for. The union of the Germans is the great central fact of the European history of the century. With the rise of the Empire and the defeat of France, the centre of political gravity was in a moment shifted from Paris to Berlin. The Empire marks the consummation of a gradual evolution, and the uprising of a great Teutonic State. With the Empire there has appeared a great political, a great military, and a great commercial force, and with its steadily increasing population Teutonic influences, both intellectual and moral, keep spreading through the world in ever-widening circles. France is no longer the arbiter of Continental nations; she can no longer claim pre-eminence in science, literature, and art. Teutonic influences are now a great modifying force; that, in a word, is the revolution of which the German Empire is the symbol and the sign.

This, then, is what the making of the German Empire means in its outward relations to the world. Internally moreover the first twenty-five years of its history present several features of singular interest and importance. Its constitutional history, its ecclesiastical relations, and its social

legislation all form excellent lessons for the foreigner to observe.

To the student of political institutions perhaps the most characteristic thing about the history of the Empire is the example that it gives us of the revival or re-affirmation, so to speak, of the principle of monarchy. That principle has received some rude shocks in recent years. The establishment of the French Republic was one, and the deposition of the Emperor of Brazil was certainly another. Both events gave great encouragement to republican ideas. Kingship in the old absolute sense had long been on the wane. The French Revolution almost shattered the foundations of the old monarchical rule. In England the old kingship received its final blow when George the Fourth surrendered his position on the question of the emancipation of the Catholics; no attempt has since been made to impose the royal will upon a reluctant Ministry or Parliament. In France the old kingship disappeared when Louis Philippe, the Citizen King, was summoned to the throne; for the Monarchy of July was built on strictly constitutional lines. Even in Prussia a very restricted constitution was reluctantly conceded. King Frederick William the Fourth vowed that he would never let a sheet of paper intervene between the God in heaven and his subjects; but even he was forced at last to yield to the spirit of the age, and as Bismarck picturesquely put it, the Crown itself threw a clod upon its coffin. The Italian States and Spain were for long in a condition of chronic revolution, and either constitutions were extorted or republics were established. It almost seemed as though the principle of kingship was doomed ere long to disappear. But the history of the German Empire has done much towards the restoration of monarchy to its old illustrious position. The Emperor William the Second

in particular has affirmed the kingly principle in language of most unusual force. As German Emperor indeed, he is but the President or Chief of the Bundesrath or Federal Council; he has coequal powers with the other Princes of the Empire; he is but *primus inter pares*. In the title German Emperor there lurks a deeper meaning than is commonly supposed. Rousseau, in one of those acute and subtle passages which are scattered about his SOCIAL CONTRACT, makes the observation that "monarchs of to-day call themselves Kings of France, Spain and England," and that "in thus holding the land they are quite sure of holding the inhabitants." The founders of the German Empire might well have had this passage in their minds. For it was to prevent the Emperor from claiming sovereign power over all the German States that the title was deliberately adopted. But as King of Prussia the Emperor is not hedged about with any such restrictions. There, within the ample limits that the Constitution grants him, he is Sir Anthony Absolute himself. But even to the Imperial Parliament, or Reichstag, he has made use of language which reminds us of the days of Cromwell or the Tudors; and the rebuke which he administered when the Reichstag refused in April last to vote congratulations to Prince Bismarck on his birthday will not be soon forgotten. As King of Prussia he seems to have dragged out from its lumber-room and furnished up anew that worn-out and rusty doctrine of "the divine right" of kings. He has openly asserted that he is King "by the grace of God"; that he is master, and there is none beside him; that he will shatter those to pieces who venture to oppose him; that the Prussian nobles are the ivy which climb about the kingly oak. Such phrases as *sic volo sic jubeo*, or *a Deo rex, a Rege lex*, are those in which

he most delights; though, to be sure, recent events may seem to suggest that the Imperial utterances should not always be taken too seriously or in too literal a sense. When he overthrew Prince Bismarck he showed the world that he intended to act according to the conceptions he had formed. There is an Eastern proverb that while two dervishes can sleep upon a rug, accommodation for two monarchs cannot be found within the area of a kingdom. The Emperor saw that there was only room for one, and he was determined that that one should be himself. In a word he has gone far to reproduce the kingly rule of Frederick the Great, a monarch indeed whom he in some ways resembles.

It seems then impossible to doubt that one of the facts which the German Empire has to teach is that the principle of monarchy is more deeply laid in human nature than might have been supposed. There are few things in history more curious to read than the confident predictions which the English admirers of revolutionary France, such as Dr. Price and Dr. Priestley, used to make of the rapid conversion of the world to republican ideas. At the present moment kingship seems quite as vigorous as ever it was before. Through the action of Germany at all events it has received a fresh impulse, and new life-blood has been let into its veins. The fact is that the roots of kingship are too closely intertwined about the traditions, the customs, and the feelings of mankind to be easily torn up. And in an age of weariness of parliamentary chatter there are many who are not unwilling to be guided by a man who knows his own mind and intends to have his own way. People are beginning to find out that Parliaments and Republics can invent no panaceas, and that the Millennium is as far as ever in the future. A mere autocracy would of course no

longer be endured, but there are many folk who are willing to leave the business of governing to those who have more time and knowledge than themselves. John Stuart Mill, who was too intellectually sincere to deceive himself or flatter others, has said very truly that "men, as well as women, do not need political rights in order that they may govern, but in order that they may not be misgoverned." And that is why people demand a constitution; it is to enable them to control a king who does not please them. For, as was truly said by Guizot, a constitution is only a device for turning ordinary mortals into tolerable monarchs. When the Czar Alexander remarked to Madame de Staël that he was "a happy accident," he put the case for constitutional monarchy on the firmest basis conceivable. And that such a monarchy is well suited to the wants of human nature, and still retains its old attractions, is surely one of the lessons which the history of the German Empire has to teach.

In the second place that history affords us one further illustration of the tenacity of life and invincible persistency of the Roman Catholic Church. The very men who had trodden down the French had finally to yield before the invisible weapons of the Pope. As a set-off to the loss of his temporal dominions he enlarged the area of his moral and spiritual authority. The dogma of infallibility was forthwith flung upon the world, and it was out of the pretensions arising from this source, which the German bishops ventured to assume, that the famous Kulturkampf, or war with Rome arose. Of the details of that conflict it would be irrelevant to speak, for the results alone are of interest to us here. The issue left the victory with the Church. In one of his speeches made during the

turmoil of the struggle, Bismarck referred to the humiliating pilgrimage of the Emperor Henry the Fourth, and vowed that he would never go to Canossa either in body or in spirit. But in the end he went a long way in that direction. A policy of blood and iron, as he was forced to reluctantly admit, may be excellent indeed when a secular power is the foe to be opposed, but against the Roman Curia material bolts are only flung in vain. The May laws of 1873, which were aimed against the Church, have been for all practical purposes repealed. The expulsion of the Jesuits is, indeed, still maintained; but the Reichstag has already passed a Bill to permit them to return, and it is only owing to the opposition of the Federal Council that the Bill has not yet received the force of law. In Prussia, where the Socialists are very strong, special efforts have been made to secure the co-operation of the Church. The Elementary Education Bill, for instance, went so far in its concessions that it had to be withdrawn amid a storm of protests. In a word the Chancellor had to learn, as many other rulers have had to learn, that the Clerical party, if not treated as a friend, may become a very dangerous foe. To secure them as allies is often worth a mass. This was peculiarly a case in which Bismarck might apply his favourite maxim, *do ut des*. And indeed the breach has been so fully healed that Prince Hohenlohe, himself a Roman Catholic and the brother of a cardinal, is now the Chancellor of the Empire. As Premier of Bavaria he had done much to secure the adhesion of his country to the Union, as to earn the title of the Living Bridge across the Main; and his promotion was both the reward of his individual merits and a proof that the strife of sects had been allayed.

The third and perhaps the most striking characteristic of the domestic history of the Empire is the policy which the Government has adopted towards Socialism and the Socialists, or Social Democrats. That policy has been one of conciliation alternating with oppression. They have been punished with one hand and petted with the other. It was admitted that an improvement in the condition of the working classes was no less a matter of expediency than of Christian duty ; but when hand in hand with these improvements Socialism was still found to flourish as vigorously as ever, then a stern attempt was made to stamp it out. The argument of the Government was something such as this : you must either accept our panaceas or go to prison. The net result has been a very curious mixture of Socialist legislation on the one hand and of coercion on the other, which it is not very easy for the observer from without to understand. But the fact appears to be that Socialist legislation is perfectly congenial to the genius of the Germans. What is called State Socialism, which is but Socialism pure and simple under the guise of a less distasteful name, seems to be in Germany an almost universally accepted idea. The German will endure, he rather will invite, an amount of interference from the State which few Englishmen would tolerate. Almost everywhere the State has reached its hand ; the bureaucracy, or the men with the pens in their hands, as Mirabeau described them, lie like a dead weight upon individual freedom. There was much truth as well as humour in Heine's jest, that an Englishman loves liberty as his lawful wife, a Frenchman loves it as his mistress, but that a German loves it as his old grandmother. And so it is that for many years past the tendency of German legislation has been in

the direction of enlarging the sphere of the interference of the State. The old Free Trade policy which Hardenberg and Stein had partially begun has been to a great extent reversed. We will take a single example of this legislation, as one which has excited much discussion, and found not a little favour with a number of philanthropists at home. We refer to that remarkable series of enactments which compel the insurance of the members of the working classes against sickness, accidents, and old age. The Acts in question were passed by the German Parliament in the years between 1884 and 1889. Nowhere else has the system of compulsory insurance been made so comprehensive and so thorough. The enactment which makes the State contribute to the pensions to be given in the cases of permanent disability or old age, is in principle as Socialist a law as could possibly be imagined. But the Socialists steadily refused to be appeased. The number of their votes cast at the elections to the Reichstag rose from about one hundred thousand in 1871 to nearly a million and a half in 1890, and to nearly two millions in 1893. A solid phalanx of forty-four Socialist deputies have now seats within the House ; and it is said that on a system of proportional representation they would be even more than that. On the whole it would probably be no exaggeration, if we take into account the families and dependents of the voters, to say that the Socialists, or Social Democrats, of all shades of opinion, number something like one-fourth of the whole population of the Empire. This at the first sight seems a portentous condition of things, and it is obvious that as a party they must be extraordinarily active and successful. They compass heaven and earth to make a single proselyte. It is said

that so long ago as 1890 the number of Socialist journals which were published in the Empire were no less than fifty-nine, of which nineteen were published daily and forty once a week. Of these the *VORWAERTS* had an enormous circulation in the north, while the *MÜNCHENER POST* was almost equally successful in the south.

These facts are no doubt extremely disappointing to the German Government; but that seems no good reason for a policy which must inevitably be either fruitless or inflame the very evils against which it is directed. That they have adopted such a policy it is impossible to doubt; for the evidence on this point is both voluminous and conclusive. The rigorous Anti-Socialist Law of 1878 expired in 1890, and a foretaste of what was coming was given by the attempts which the Government made not only to renew it, but even to make it more stringent than before. So severe, however, were the penalties demanded, that even the Reichstag recoiled from them in horror. As a result the Executive was driven to fall back upon the ordinary law, and the manner in which it has been used suggests the superfluity of any additional legislation. On the first of May, 1895, the whole issue of the *VORWAERTS*, amounting to about fifty thousand copies, was seized by the police, and the editor, Dr. Braun, was sent to prison, on his refusal to reveal the authorship of an article which had offended the authorities. How much confinement was required to bring him to a better state of mind we have not the means of knowing. A little later Dr. Delbrück, the editor of *PREUSSISCHE JAHRBÜCHER*, an able and influential magazine, was arrested on a criminal charge, for commenting in a very temperate manner on the policy of the Government. He was fortunately able to prove that he had no ill in-

tentions, and the charge was allowed to be withdrawn. The case of Dr. Förster was even worse. It seems that upon the anniversary of the battle of Sedan the Emperor had spoken of the Socialists as a "rabble"; Dr. Förster had ventured to denounce this language, for which he was immediately arrested on a charge of treason, and was condemned to three months' imprisonment. These cases are conspicuous, because their victims are well known to be men of high integrity and cultivated talents. But there are many more obscure who have suffered equally, but of whom we hear nothing. We may make some guess at their number from the fact that the Chancellor in defending Herr von Köller, the retiring Minister of the Interior, prided himself on having secured no less than fifty-six convictions against the Socialists in the period of four months. But this was only striking down an individual here and there. The Government resolved to treat the Socialists, as Caligula wished to treat the Romans, as though they had a single neck. By a decree of November 30th the whole of the Socialist Central Committees and organisations were dissolved, and forbidden to meet under the threat of heavy penalties. The blow was well-directed, for a party that cannot organise or meet except in secret, is for the moment nearly strangled; but men who are determined will always find out ways and means, and it remains to be seen what effect, if any, the decree will have.

It is hard to understand the wisdom of such a policy. Of all Socialists the Germans are those from whom the least harm is to be expected. They have not that tendency to fly to extreme revolutionary methods which distinguishes their brethren in France and other countries. Their leaders,



Herr Bebel and Herr Liebknecht, have repeatedly, both in Parliament and out of it, denied the disloyalty of their party to the Crown, and there is no reason for disbelieving them. The Germans are a phlegmatic slowly-moving race, the least likely in the world to have recourse to violence. In the great majority of cases their Socialism is nothing more probably than a pious aspiration. If a man is discontented with his lot and the existing social scheme, he may well desire to change them, without dreaming of attempting any violent revolution. M. Guizot, in one of those passages in his history which so delight a Frenchman, elaborately argues that in France the acme of civilisation has been reached ; and he gives as the reason why Germany has lagged behind, that there "the intellectual development has always moved in advance of the social development," and that "the human spirit has there been much more prosperous than the human condition." There may be some truth in this, but it is hardly a reason for concluding that the German Socialist is a very dangerous person. The French Socialist is infinitely more so, because while the French mind is logical, the German mind is not, and, as has been well said, it is logic that causes revolutions. The German mind is of the type that loves to build imaginary schemes, and to dream dreams of the regeneration of mankind. It revels in views, theories, philosophical systems and ideas ; it is rather tentative and nebulous, than precise and well-defined. Dr. Mansel, in allusion to the proneness of the German to indulge in vague and shadowy speculations, has described his country as,

The land which produced one Kant with  
a K,  
And a great many Cants with a C.

The Frenchman rushes onwards to

conclusions ; the German feels his way. Moreover the German Socialist can plead in his defence that after all he is only bettering the instructions of his rulers. As has already been observed State Socialism is the recognised creed of the great majority of influential Germans. It is notorious that Bismarck himself used to take counsel of that eminent Socialist Lassalle. The reigning Emperor is credited with having much the same ideas, and it is said that he wishes to become known, as his great prototype before him, as a true King of the Beggars. At least it seemed to be so when he summoned the International Labour Conference to Berlin.

We believe, therefore, that this oppressive policy is altogether beside the mark. If there is any lesson to be learned from past experience it is this, that such methods of suppression must always prove abortive. The Emperor and his Ministers cannot be ignorant of this ; but for some reason which foreigners are unable to divine the Socialist spectre seems to have thrown them into an ecstasy of fear. Ever since the founding of the Empire this fear has been present more or less to those in authority in Germany. Even Moltke is reported to have said that there was more to be feared from the Socialists than from any foreign foe. On more than one occasion the present Emperor, when swearing in recruits, has warned them that some day they might be ordered to shoot down their fellow-countrymen. General Schellendorf, the Minister of War, speaking lately in the Reichstag, threatened the Socialists with the use of military force ; and the other day at Dusseldorf Baron von der Horst, the new Home Minister, exhorted his hearers to heal all political and religious strife, in order to unite against the common foe. It is possible that the German Ministers may have some

secret information which would justify such language and such a course of policy. It may be that they have reason to believe that among the more harmless social theorists some anarchists and criminals have taken shelter, and are making use of the Socialist machinery to promote their own nefarious ends. If that be so, it is perhaps but an act of simple prudence to strike a blow which cannot nicely discriminate between the innocent and the guilty. In some such hypothesis as this the apology for a system of rigorous repression may be found ; but in the absence of any certain knowledge, it is a policy which strongly resembles persecution. We may read in Gibbon how a famous Roman advocate was once seized and carried off a captive by a wild barbaric horde. Having torn out his tongue and sewn up his lips, they exclaimed in

savage glee that the viper could then no longer hiss ; but they seem not to have reflected that, though a single voice was silenced, there were many thousands left to cry aloud for vengeance upon those who had wrought the horrid deed. This is a story over which the rulers of Germany might not unprofitably ponder. They might reflect that when thought is once abroad, it can in no wise be confined ; that you cannot put the human mind in chains or throw it into dungeons ; that the sound of its voice, as the sound of many waters, will grow in volume and awaken everywhere reverberating echoes. To attempt to crush the thought of man is but to throw the people back into the furnace of their sullen discontents, to sow the ground with dragons' teeth. It is upon the tombstone of the martyr that the assassin whets his dagger.

## TICONDEROGA.

To a generation which is said to find Scott bombastic and Dickens dull it requires perhaps some hardihood to mention the name of Fenimore Cooper. But the young gentlemen who write in praise of each other in the newspapers form after all but a very small and not a very important part of the reading public; and if we may judge from the bookstalls, the author of *THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS* still holds his own, together with many another whom these arbiters of taste would relegate to the dust and silence of the upper shelf. No doubt there are moments when it is not possible to take Cooper quite seriously; he was always writing, and always writing in a hurry. We all of us laugh at him sometimes, but yet love him all the more. Our children's grandchildren, we dare swear, will go on loving him without the laughter; for those little familiar pedantries of his will be by that time beyond the reach of criticism. They will have mellowed into the quaint mannerisms of a bygone period. The dramatic movement, the stirring scenes, the picturesque old-world figures will remain, when the power or the wish to question the accuracy of their painting will have passed away. And the historic value of his work, even if Englishmen are indifferent to it (which we do not think they are, and certainly they ought not to be), puts him on a pedestal alone so far as Americans are concerned, for he has made the most interesting and dramatic period of their history his own. Writers on both sides of the Atlantic are still taking the struggle with the

French in America and the subsequent War of Independence as a background for their tales; but they are all of them too late to have such value as Cooper's books have. He was not indeed, strictly speaking, contemporary with the period he chiefly wrote of, but he knew personally the generation who were, which is very much the next best thing. And indeed the America he lived in was practically the old America, politically independent, but in habits of thought and ways of life still more than half colonial. Slavery was a matter of course, and had as yet raised no question between North and South. In the North the cities had not yet eaten up the old provincial society, and the country gentleman living on his paternal acres was still an item in the Middle States. The railroad and the telegraph had not as yet linked States together and banished much of the mystery of the wilderness. People still travelled slowly and seldom, and politicians in Cooper's youth were mostly gentlemen who as often as not rode their own nags to Washington attended by servants and packhorses, and cherished a primitive regard for the welfare of their country. The novelist himself entered Yale as early as 1802, and after serving in the United States navy from 1805 to 1811, retired to a life of rural ease in his own province of New York. There for the rest of his life, with the exception of a few years spent in Europe, he lived among the scenes in which most of his books were laid. He must to a certainty have been in constant intercourse with people who

served through the Revolutionary War, and in his youth must have even known many who fought at Louisbourg, at Ticonderoga, or at Quebec.

Cooper's Indians are, from a realistic point of view, regarded usually as his weakest point, though from an artistic one they are probably his strongest. He was a little late, no doubt, for a personal acquaintance with the Red Man of the forests; but if he idealised him, what pleasure his ideals have given to countless readers! With his backwoodsmen the most captious critic cannot quarrel, but the backwoodsman survived long into Cooper's day; he had every opportunity of knowing him well, and made the most of it. Indeed the genus may still be studied, though no longer, to be sure, in the Mohawk Valley or by the banks of Lake George. For our own part, having been thrown much with him, we will say that some familiarity with the type of which Cooper wrote, has increased rather than diminished our affection for Natty Bumppo in all his various guises.

Most of us, no doubt, made our first acquaintance with Cooper at a tender age, when even a garden shrubbery contained something of the mysterious; and the familiar backgrounds against which the fancy of childhood pictured the Indian and the hunter, still thrust themselves behind the pages of *THE DEERSLAYER* or *THE PATHFINDER* as we read them now. For ourselves indeed we were fortunate at this remote period in having Savenake forest at our very door; and its glades, avenues, and thickets became so saturated in fancy with red-skins and scouts, that a something more than ordinary acquaintance with North American lakes and forests is still powerless to shift the whole scenery when Cooper's heroes come upon the stage. At the period of which we write the British schoolboy was still,

we fancy, thoroughly staunch in the notion that British soldiers were invincible except when greatly outnumbered, and that one Englishman was equal to three Frenchmen or even more. Yet there is a certain nook in that Wiltshire Arcady, to which we think we could still find our way, that for years was associated in our mind with an almost incredible disaster to British arms, with some monstrous dream of a great army full of pride and confidence, ignominiously routed and shattered by a lamentably inferior force of Frenchmen. It was but a shadowy recollection for which one of Cooper's novels seemed to be responsible, and it was not till a much later period of life that an acquaintance with the tragedy of *Ticonderoga* explained the dim impression. For it is in one of his later and less known books that Cooper has treated of that bloody scene. A hundred people will be familiar with *THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS* who possibly never even heard of *SATANSTOE*, a work that is valuable rather for the excellent picture it gives of colonial society, than for the power of narrative which distinguishes so many of the others.

Who indeed remembers *Ticonderoga* except Americans and possibly a few Frenchmen? Parkman's glowing pages may here and there among Englishmen have shed some light upon these forgotten fights, though Warburton's statelier and more measured but still stirring eloquence is, we fear, as much out of mind as it is out of print. Yet *Ticonderoga* was probably the worst, and certainly the most ignominious defeat that England ever received from the hands of France; nor can it have slipped our memory because it was inexpensive, for we lost two thousand men in a single quarter of a summer's day. As many fell, indeed, upon that July afternoon as in the weeks and months of successful com-

bat that have kept the memory of Louisbourg green and made the plains of Abraham famous throughout the world. And all this slaughter, for, judged by the scale of those wars it was immense, was inflicted by little more than three thousand Frenchmen; and sadder still to relate, some fourteen thousand Britons retreated from the stricken field at sunset, and retreated too in such fashion that panic is the only word to fitly express the nature of their discomfiture. With all this it might well be said that such a battle had better be forgotten. But there is another side to it, for with seeming paradox, it may be urged that British soldiers have not often fought with more dogged valour, and that nearly every man of the two thousand who fell, fell facing the foe. Our poor soldiers had some strange leaders in the eighteenth century, and none stranger than the unfortunate gentleman who gave Montcalm such a victory on the shores of Lake George, that even Frenchmen, who are not overmuch given to such concessions, were inclined in this instance to give God the greater glory. The very spirits of the dead who have now slept so long beside the shores of the romantic lake, would rise from their graves, one would almost think, at the name of Abercromby. Braddock has been held up to sufficient execration, but Braddock's military errors were almost venial in comparison, and, moreover, he died fighting among his men like the stubborn bull-dog that he was. The bones of his victims on the Monongahela had been picked clean by buzzards and crunched by hungry wolves before Abercromby appeared upon the scene to give another exhibition of what a British general of the Georgian age could do. And unhappily for him, he did not, like Braddock, die fighting, for he did not give himself the chance.

It was the summer, the momentous summer, of 1758 to which we would refer. America had grown very weary of Lord Loudon in chief command. He had not, it is true, sworn at the colonists like Braddock, but his sins had been so flagrantly those of omission that his troops, who were numerous, had lost heart, and the colonial wits compared him to the figure of St. George on a tavern sign, always galloping forward but never moving. Pitt's first act had been to recall him peremptorily and with scant courtesy. The rifle, the scalping-knife, and the torch had been busy upon the French and Indian side, from the Hampshire grants in the far North to the Ulster settlements in the valley of Virginia. Isolated forts, lonely block-houses, and palisadoed hamlets by the score had been swept away amid hideous scenes of flame and slaughter. The frontier had been driven back along the whole British line. The fringe of civilisation had again become a wilderness, where at long intervals the buzzard and the crow kept grim watch from their tree-tops over the mutilated and festering corpses of a butchered peasantry. Nearly two million Anglo-Saxons were at this time actually on the defensive against less than a hundred thousand Frenchmen and the Indian allies that their successes had won for them.

Regiments of British soldiers and colonial militia had been marching up and down for a year or two and effected nothing. But Pitt was now in office, and a great effort was to be made to crush once and for all the formidable power of France in the Western world. Massachusetts alone had ten thousand men in the service of the King by land and sea, and had incurred the immense debt, for the period and for her capacities, of half a million sterling. Connecticut was scarcely behind her, while the province



of New Hampshire had one in three of her male population in the field. Wolfe and Amherst were already thundering at the gates of Louisbourg: Grant was marching with a large force through Virginian forests to exact a tardy vengeance for Braddock at Du Quesne; and the greatest army that had yet been seen on American soil was mustering where the old Dutch frontier town of Albany looked down upon the Hudson. Some fifteen thousand men, nearly seven thousand of whom were regulars, with a formidable train of artillery were there upon the frontiers of the northern wilderness through which ran the great route to Canada. There were the red-coated infantry of the Line, veterans many of them from European fields, and kilted Highlanders with their wild music, led by their hereditary chieftains, and full of pride; for there was not a private among them, says Mrs. Grant, the wife of one of their officers, "who did not think himself above the rank of a common man." And there too were fast mustering the colonial militia, resplendent in new uniforms of blue faced with scarlet, and admirably armed. Every heart, not only in the camp itself, but throughout the northern colonies, beat high with confidence and regarded the French as in effect already crushed. Abercromby was in command, and nothing was known either for or against him; but Pitt had made things, as he thought, safe, by naming as his Brigadier the brave and gifted Lord Howe, a young nobleman, called by Wolfe who knew him, the best soldier in the British army. There is a tradition in America that the airs of superiority assumed towards the colonists by the British officers of these wars helped considerably to sow the seeds of revolution, and this, though perhaps there was intolerance on both sides, is readily conceivable.

Lord Howe with all his rank, his military renown, and his personal accomplishments, was neither haughty nor supercilious, but made himself in a short time as much beloved by every class in the colonies as he was by his own soldiers. In social intercourse he won the hearts of the Americans by his modesty and good breeding; and he won their respect also by recognising, that though virtually Commander-in-Chief, he had much to learn in forest warfare, and by setting himself at once to learn it. He not only accompanied on some of their preliminary expeditions one or other of the famous bodies of rangers who had made their names more terrible to Frenchmen than whole regiments of grenadiers; but he took measures to make his own light infantry more serviceable in the woods by stripping them of every useless ornament and impediment, even to cutting off their long hair and the skirts of their coats. He shared, too, every hardship with his men, washed his own linen at the brook, and ate his salt pork with a clasp knife. Albany was of course at such a time in a whirl of excitement, gaiety, and hospitality. Madame Schuyler, a provincial fine lady, had a mansion in the neighbourhood, and there is a pretty story that Lord Howe, who was her guest for a time, so won the heart of the old lady that she embraced him with tears when he rode off, as it so happened, to his death; and when a week or two later a horseman came galloping at full speed down the road, crying aloud as he passed that my lord was dead, this excellent lady, it is said, fell into a swoon, and the whole house resounded with wailing and lamentation.

By the end of June the army had moved on to the head of Lake George, and were encamped close to the blackened ruins of Fort William Henry. This post, after being forced by

Montcalm to capitulate in the previous year, had been made the scene of that bloody massacre of the British by the Indians, which forms one of the most stirring chapters in *THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS*. The tables now seemed as if they were going to be turned with a vengeance. The shouts of victory were even then rising from the British battalions before Louisbourg, though Abercromby's army could know nothing of this as yet, for news travelled through the woods in those days with painful slowness. Of this campaign on the lakes, however, no man doubted the issue. The natural waterway through mountains and forests to Canada seemed practically open to such a force. Montcalm was the only obstacle of any kind, and he lay at the juncture of Lakes George and Champlain forty miles away, with but a paltry three thousand men of all arms. An immense fleet of boats and batteaux had been collected, and upon a sunny morning, the 5th of July, with leisurely confidence and in all the pomp and circumstance of war, Abercromby's host floated out upon the beautiful lake whose clear and shining surface is happily commemorated in the Indian name of Horican, or the Silvery Waters. The pages of historian and novelist alike glow when they recall the splendour of this notable scene. The faded type of old New England journals, the yellow tattered letters written at the time, all testify to the glories of such a pageant as it was certainly in those days not often given to mortals to feast their eyes upon. Upwards of twelve hundred boats, loaded with troops and munitions of war, stretched like a vast armada along the bosom of the lake. The summer morning was brilliant and cloudless. The sun had just risen over the mountain tops, and chased away the mists that daybreak

had found hanging along the swampy shores. Not a breath of air was stirring, not a ripple ruffling the silvery waters, nor over that immense sea of woodland which rose, wave upon wave, from the island-studded shores came breeze enough to move a blossom or a leaf. With regular precision, its wings stretching to right and left, and, as the narrow lake grew narrower reaching almost from shore to shore, the splendid pageant swept northwards. In the centre were the British regiments all gay in scarlet and white and gold; upon the right and left and in the rear went the colonial troops in soberer guise; from the whole line came the glint and flash of burnished arms, and above the boats at intervals hung the standards of famous regiments, while the brave show of a thousand tartans filled in the picture. Ten thousand oars with eager stroke caught the sunlight, and the bands of various regiments with their martial music, woke the echoes of the silent leafy mountains which, as the lake narrowed, hung above them upon either side.

The Fifty-Fifth, the Twenty-Seventh, and the Forty-Fourth regiments of the Line were there, and one battalion of the Royal Americans, then lately formed, but destined to win fame in all quarters of the globe as the Sixtieth Rifles. The Forty-Sixth and the Eightieth were there also, and, conspicuous in their then strange and wild attire, the Forty-Second Highlanders, or the Black-Watch. Twenty regiments from New England, New York, and the Jerseys were eager to show their over-sea compatriots that they were not wholly novices in the art of war. The gallant Bradstreet, prince of batteaux leaders, who in the following year was to win immortality by the grand dash which cut expiring Canada in two at Frontenac, was also

there and entirely in his element. There too was Rogers, most redoubtable of woodland fighters, and his heroic band in mocassins and hunting-shirts. It might well indeed have seemed an invincible array as things were then. Philip Schuyler and Israel Putnam led companies of provincials, and many another man marched proudly beneath the flag of England that day who twenty years later was to turn his sword against his mother-country and his King. Pressing onward through the summer night the flotilla had reached by daybreak the foot of the lake, whence issues the five or six miles of river which, impeded here and there by rapids, connects it with Lake Champlain. At the spot where this channel widens into the latter lake and forms an outstanding promontory rose the famous fortress of Ticonderoga. Here Montcalm, thanks to the jealousy or supineness of his government, stood at bay with considerably less than four thousand men. Behind him lay the three hundred miles of wilderness which shut him out from Canada and from succour. He had only a week's provisions, and retreat was impossible. There was nothing for it but to fight, and even to his brave heart it seemed as if such an unequal struggle could have but one issue. If Montcalm did not quite despair it was because experience told him that one hope was yet left to him in British generalship. The connecting river in its course from the upper to the lower lake forms a right angle, flowing at first due north and then turning sharp to the eastward. Abercromby had landed his army on the western shore of the waters and determined to march round to Ticonderoga upon that bank instead of crossing the river as was possible, and cutting off the angle it formed. At daybreak on

the 6th the army entered the dense woodlands which clothed the rich strip between the hills and the river. The men marched in four columns, or rather forced their way as best they could through the tangled swamps. Lord Howe with his light infantry, and Rogers with his rangers, led the way. Montcalm's light troops had been pushed forward for purposes of observation; and a corps of these, some four hundred strong, hurrying back to Ticonderoga, missed their way in the dense forest, and by a pure accident came in contact with the head of Lord Howe's column. A fierce conflict, hand to hand and from tree to tree, ensued. Nearly all the French were killed or taken prisoners; but the success was dearly purchased by the loss of the gallant Howe, who fell dead at the first discharge with a bullet in his heart. Abercromby seemed stunned by the fall of his lieutenant: it was as though the army no longer had a leader; and the troops lay all night in the damp woods to no purpose, to be with as little reason marched back again in the morning to the landing-place. Abercromby now proposed to cross the river to the east bank and take a road through the woods which cut off the angle already alluded to. The bridge had been destroyed by the French; but the energetic Bradstreet constructed another in a few hours, and by the evening Abercromby, leaving his artillery behind him, advanced his whole force to a point upon the river about two miles from Ticonderoga, where another bridge and a sawmill had just been burned and abandoned by the French. He had been told that Montcalm had six thousand men and was expecting further reinforcements, and it was this report, which he took no pains to verify, that accounted for his haste and the fatuous abandonment of the

artillery so laboriously brought up from Albany.

In the meantime Montcalm had not been idle. Levis and Bourlamaque were both with him, and a friendly difference of opinion between these three able soldiers as to the best fashion of facing such fearful odds had somewhat delayed their action. The fort itself was rejected as a defensive position, since it was open to artillery from various commanding elevations. At the last moment, on the morning of the 7th, it was decided to throw a breastwork across the peninsula several hundred yards in front of the fort which stood near the point. The centre of this peninsula was high, undulating ground, while the strip upon each side bordering on the water was a densely-wooded swamp. The high ground facing landward, therefore, was the only point easily assailable by actual assault. There was a ridge, which with somewhat tortuous course stretched from swamp to swamp, and upon this Montcalm and his men, barely twenty-four hours before the English grenadiers came in sight, began to erect their breastworks. The famous battalions of La Sarre and Languedoc, with Rousillon of La Renie, Bearn, and Guienne were there, and with them were both colonial regulars, militia, and volunteers. Every man of them threw himself with untiring energy into the work; while even the officers, stripped to their shirts and axe in hand, toiled all day long in the blazing sun.

Abercromby sent his engineers forward at dawn upon the 8th, and from the neighbouring heights of Mount Defiance they saw a breastwork of logs seven or eight feet high, packed tight with earth and sandbags, spanning the whole breadth of the peninsula. In front of the breastwork the ground trended gently downwards, and the whole slope was

covered with a bristling palisade of branches facing outwards, their points sharpened. Beyond these formidable defences the forest for about two hundred yards was laid flat as if by a hurricane, and the whole open space was a chaos of felled trees with their tops facing towards the foe. All this, if Montcalm had been opposed by a capable general, was work thrown away. There was more than one eminence from which the inside of his breastworks could have been raked by artillery; while a few miles higher up on Lake Champlain there was a point at which a moiety of Abercromby's army could have completely cut off the retreat of the French, and left them to be pounded at will by artillery or starved out at leisure. But Abercromby decided it was not worth while to bring up his guns, and having left Montcalm due time to make his position impregnable, proceeded to assault it in the open with the bayonet. The officers attached to the expedition seem to have been of the average class of that time, whose mission it was to get themselves killed with unquestioning cheerfulness. There do, indeed, appear to have been on this occasion some dissentient voices, but they were raised without effect. The colonists, many of whom knew the district well, no doubt wondered at the tactics of the British general; but every one's blood was up, and the massacres at Fort William Henry had left a burning desire for revenge. Nor had the soldiers as yet seen with their own eyes the nature of the task before them; Lord Howe was dead, and the brain of the army seems to have been paralysed.

It was high noon, and a blazing sun poured its rays vertically down on the front ranks of the British army as they moved out of the forest

into that maze of tangled branches through which they were to fight their way. The colonial rangers and light infantry, who had been pushed forward to drive in Montcalm's outposts, fell back on either flank as the long red lines of grenadiers with bayonets fixed, supported by the Highlanders nearly a thousand strong, stepped out into the sunshine. From a neighbouring hilltop four hundred friendly Indians, whom Sir William Johnson (that queer backwoods baronet) had brought to share the approaching triumph, looked cynically down and shook their heads. It might be magnificent, but it was not war according to their notions, and they utterly refused to throw their lives away in any such midsummer madness.

It is a lamentable tale that remains to be told, and one of tragic monotony. Between the French breastworks and the leafy screen of the forest the distance to be travelled was perhaps two hundred yards. Forcing their way through a tangled chaos such as even Leatherstocking himself would have found no easy task, the front lines of the British infantry went on with orders to carry by steel alone those bristling barriers behind which three thousand levelled rifles lay secure. The works were eight feet high, and not a Frenchman was visible; but long before the grenadiers had reached the palisade of sharpened boughs that protected the main barrier of logs, a sheet of smoke and flame burst from the whole face of the latter, and a hail of bullets, mixed at various points with grape, swept through the advancing ranks. The hopelessness of the situation must have been apparent to any eye; but Abercromby was two miles off at the sawmill, and all that was left for his soldiers was to dare and die. This indeed they did with splendid and piteous gallantry. The order to withhold their

fire was soon treated by the troops with the contempt that in such circumstances it deserved; but this availed them little. Here and there the heads of the enemy, as they mounted the platforms to fire, showed above the rampart, and here and there an English bullet found its way between the logs. A battery of artillery would have knocked the rude defences into splinters in an hour, but to rifle or bayonet they were impregnable, and the artillery, as we know, had been left upon the lake shore. Regiment after regiment came bravely on, but each line was met, as it vainly strove to tear its way through the ragged branches, by such a hail of bullets and grape-shot as no troops could face and live.

As each shattered column fell sullenly back, leaving a fearful tribute of dead and wounded, fresh ones came rolling on like the waves of a sea, to break one after the other at the foot of that impenetrable barrier. Grenadiers, Highlanders, riflemen, vied with one another in the desperate valour with which they flung themselves on a position that the coolness and discipline of the veteran regiments behind it made more hopelessly impregnable. Thus for an hour or more went on the useless slaughter; and then a brief lull, born of sheer exhaustion, allowed the smoke to lift and gave Abercromby a chance of changing his tactics. The swamps on either wing of Montcalm's position were not fortified. Their natural obstacles were indeed considerable, and they were occupied in force by Canadian riflemen; but they offered quite a feasible opening for attack compared to that deadly breastwork on which Abercromby was so madly hurling his best troops. There was nothing to prevent him taking a week to consider his plans, for Montcalm was of course powerless as an assailant;



but even now he did not think of his artillery, nor would he pause for a moment in his fatuous course. Fresh troops were ordered forward, and with them returned again and again to the charge the survivors of the first attack. Every time, however, they were met by the same steady and pitiless fire. Some indeed fought their way to the foot of the breastwork, when, finding it impossible to advance and refusing to retire, they were shot down at close quarters in the trenches. There is no space here to touch on the tales of individual daring that have survived from this bloody day. "The scene was frightful," says Parkman; "masses of infuriated men who could not go forward and would not go back, straining for an enemy they could not reach and firing at an enemy they could not see." "It was in vain at last," says Warburton, "as it was at first; and upon that rude barrier, which the simplest manœuvres would have avoided, or one hour of well plied artillery swept away, the flower of British chivalry was crushed and broken." Yet four hours of this insensate work had not daunted the spirit of these gallant men. At five o'clock the most determined onslaught of the whole day was made upon the French right. Then, and then only, was Montcalm for a brief moment in danger, and was forced to hurry in person with his reserves to where the Highlanders, by sheer contempt of death, were making their way up and over the parapet.

One more attack was made at six, but it was an expiring effort. Human endurance could do no more. What from heat, fatigue, and long hours of bloody repulse, the nerves of the troops were in that state which invites reaction. It matters little what started it; two companies firing accidentally on one another, some say. At any rate, when the retreat was sounded,

the very men who had braved death for five hours with such splendid heroism were seized, now danger no longer menaced them, with sudden panic. Some of the colonial troops remained upon the field, and from the shelter of the woods covered the parties that were still engaged in bringing off the wounded. The rest of the army, though no enemy was following or could follow, hastened in wild disorder along the forest tracks or through the swamps to the landing-place. Here Bradstreet and his corps, ever foremost in emergencies, averted a catastrophe, and resisted every attempt to seize the boats, which, with a panic-stricken army, would have been so fatal. The fugitives were still four times as numerous as the exhausted foe whom they imagined to be at their heels; and the stampede is the more remarkable from the sterling quality of the troops who took part in it, and the fact of such an intrepid spirit as they had shown being capable of a relapse so abject.

It only remained now to count the cost. Nearly two thousand men upon the British side had fallen, an immense loss when the scale of the battle is considered; and sixteen hundred and fifty of these were regulars. The French lost but a little over three hundred; and though they had fought all day behind cover and in comparative security, none the less did that brave handful of men deserve the chorus that rang to their praise throughout Canada and France.

Montcalm does ample justice to the long sustained valour of his foe; and the Chevalier Johnstone who was with him, bears still more impartial witness to the contempt of death shown by these gallant victims of stupidity. Abercromby seems almost to have shared the panic of his men. Not contented with hurrying them back to the head of Lake George and to the

spot whence they had set out a few days before in such pomp and splendour, he was not easy in his mind about his precious and unused artillery till he had actually deposited it safely within the walls of Albany. Hither soon after came Amherst, hastening from Louisbourg with his freshly-gathered laurels and three thousand men ; but it was by that time too late in the season, and the end of all things American for the French was not to come yet. Poor Abercromby here fades out of history. Tradition says that he and Wolfe returned to England in the same ship, a strangely assorted pair ! Fortunately when the name of Abercromby recurs to Englishmen, they think of Egypt and not of America, of a glorious victory and not of a lamentable defeat.

Another generation was yet to wake the echoes of these sublime solitudes with a strife as bitter and in a cause not less momentous. But all this seems now equally remote. The very majesty of the scenes themselves invite us even now to people them in fancy with the motley and picturesque battalions that for half a century more or less made them their battlefield. The English traveller may even fancy that the strains which he now hears floating over the tops of the hemlocks and maples are the band of the old Royal Rousillon, till he awakes to the fact that it is music from the ball-room of a hotel ; or he may imagine the craft that fleck the blue surface of the lake to be propelled by the sinewy arms of leather-frocked rangers or painted Iroquois, till some panting steamer with its huge paddle-wheel

destroys the illusion and reminds him that they probably contain shopmen from Albany and school-mistresses from Boston. But the old gray walls of Fort Ticonderoga still moulder amid the throb of modern life, and beneath the feet of hurrying tourists or under the wheels even of screaming engines, or sometimes even yet, no doubt, amid the murmur of the old pines and hemlocks, still sleep the dead who fell here by thousands when the fate of America was yet hanging in the balance. How far they came and what a mixture of men were they whose bones now mingle with the dust of these historic shores : fresh-faced lads from Devon homesteads ; sinewy Gaels from the yet savage Highlands ; swarthy Frenchmen from the slopes of the Pyrenees ; wild Canadians from the banks of the St. Lawrence ; or fair-haired Germans fighting for all sides in turn. Here, too, lies the quaint colonial soldier of the three-cornered hat and coarse blue uniform, far enough from the Jersey village or Massachusetts churchyard, where still sleep his forbears, and his children, and his children's children. And there too, last but by no means least, reposes the dust of the most striking figure perhaps of all this motley bygone throng, the fearless ranger of the wilderness, whom Cooper has made live for ever in the person of Leatherstocking. With his fringed hunting-shirt, his mocassins and long unerring rifle, but above all with his amazing nerve and iron frame, his valorous self-confidence and inexhaustible resource, he must ever, above all his contemporaries, hold our fancy.

## THE CRAFT OF HUNTING.

IN a previous paper under this title we wrote of the fragment of manuscript which represents the earliest treatise on sport that exists in our language. We now turn to the more important work which follows it, *THE MASTER OF THE GAME*, dedicated, as the following extract shows, to Henry of Monmouth, Prince of Wales.

To the honour and reverence of you, my right worshipful and dread lord, Henry, by the grace of God eldest son and heir unto the excellent and Christian prince Henry the Fourth . . . . I, your own in every humble wise, am minded to make this little simple book, which I recommend and submit to your noble and wise correction ; the which book shall, if it like to your foresaid Lordship, be named and called *Mayster of the Game* . . . . and though it be so, my dear lord, that many an one could better have made the same and eke more cunningly than I, yet two things there be that principally have bolded me and caused me this work to make on hand : the first is trust of your noble correction ; the second that though I unworthy be, I am Master of the Game with that noble prince your father, for I would not that his hunters nor yours, that be or should come hereafter, were unknown in the perfectness of this art of hunting.

So opens, with true author's modesty, the earliest book on sport, deserving that name, in our language. Who was the writer, unless that Edmund Langley who was Master of the Game to his nephew King Richard the Second, we cannot tell. When it was written we can say no more positively than that it was at some time between the years 1413 and 1422 when Prince Harry was still sowing his wild oats with Poins and Falstaff and the immortal company that gathered round him.

A little simple book the author calls it ; and a small thing it is in truth, but by no means his own. It is taken bodily from the French of Gaston Phœbus, Count of Foix, who was one of the best sportsmen that ever lived ; and it is on that account one of the best sporting books that we have ever read. Though never yet printed, as the translator had hoped, for the benefit of the hunters that should come after, it is worthier of the honour than nine-tenths of the ephemeral stuff that is poured down upon us every day, not only as a treatise on hunting, but as a specimen of early English prose.

For our translator, like his original, is a true sportsman, a man who delights in the chase because it brings him nearer to nature. Also he has read Chaucer and caught some of Chaucer's infection ; for though he quotes him but once by name, yet the poet's spirit may be traced in many a passage. He is at pains to prove, after the manner of the Frenchman before him, that hunting is not only a delightful but a strictly moral pursuit, tending to keep men clear of the seven deadly sins and lead them to paradise eternal ; but these philosophic reflections are pale and colourless beside the description of the innocent pleasures of sport.

For when the hunter riseth in the morning he seeth a sweet and fair morrow and the clear weather and bright, and heareth the song of the small fowls, the which singen sweetly with great melody and full of love, every one in his language in the best wise that he may. After that, he heareth of his own kind, and when the sun is arise, he shall see the fresh dew

upon the small twigs and grass, and the sun which by his virtue shall make them shine, and that is great joy and liking to the hunter's heart.

Yes, indeed, Edmund Langley (if you were he that wrote these words), it is great joy and liking to the true hunter's heart. "Dash it, what a morning it is," says honest Mr. Jor-rocks when he turns out early for the last day of the season. "Blessed if I don't get up at five o'clock in the morning every day for the rest of my life." The thought is the same in the mind of the city grocer of the nineteenth and the royal hunter of the fourteenth century, both alike good sportsmen. Some of us, too, in our humble fashion have shared in this great joy and liking. We have ridden in the chill September mornings many a long mile through glistening lanes, have climbed the highest ridge of Ex-moor and seen the sun sweep away the mist below us, bringing half Devon, with Lundy and Hartland and the sea, before our eyes; and then, turning our back upon it, have cantered on through dripping grass and heather, past frozen turf-pits and brown moor-waters till we struck the sea again, and arrived at what our author calls the "semble or gathering" and what we call the meet, where men said in effect as they said in the fourteenth century: "Lo! here a great hart, a deer of high meating and pasturing; go we move him." And this too, as our writer fails not to remark, is a great joy and liking.

But to enjoy any chase as a sportsman should, a man must know the habits both of his quarry and of his hounds; and to this end each several beast, both of venery and of chase, must have a chapter to itself. So we begin with the hare, which is a good little beast, of much sport and of better liking to hunt than any other, were it not that she is so little; and

pass next to the hart, which is a beast of marvellous great cunning and wonder-perilous, for, as the proverb says, "After the boar the leech, and after the hart the bier." Then follow in due order the buck, the roe, the boar, and the wolf; the fox, "which stinketh evermore," the grey, or badger, which liveth more by sleeping than anything else, the otter, and finally the cat, of which last our author dares well say that if any beast has the devil's strain in him it is he, whether wild or tame. Martins and polecats are left undescribed, for no hunter goeth to wood with intent to hunt them, though if he fail to find a fox he may gladly chase either of them. Finally the cony is left severely alone, inasmuch as men hunt them only with ferrets and "long small hays," which we understand to be nets. Nevertheless the cony enjoys a certain distinction, for none other beast in England save him alone is called *riot*, a fact which some of us, who use the word far too loosely, would do well to remember.

But readers must not think that the various beasts are lightly passed over. On the contrary, the nature of every one with his times, his seasons, his habits, his wiles, his food, his goings out and his comings in, is described with astonishing minuteness and accuracy, leaving little or nothing for us moderns to add, and offering us a good deal that we may advantageously learn. And though the hart, as the noblest of all beasts of venery and the most crafty of quarries, receives the greatest share of attention, yet boar and wolf, buck and roe are in no wise neglected. Perhaps the most curious example, out of many, of the close study to which one and all have been subjected is the account of their voices. Thus, stags "singen in their language which men call bellowing"; bucks also bellow,

but much lower than the hart, and "rutteling in the throat"; roes "sing right a foul song, for it seemeth they go to as if they were bit with hounds"; a vixen<sup>1</sup> "crieth with an hos [hoarse] voice as a wood [mad] hound doth."

Moreover, our author has a good word to say for the chase of all these beasts. He does not despise the hare because he has hunted fox, nor the fox because he has hunted deer; but he gives to every one his proper meed of praise. The roe in particular is favoured with much eulogy; and those who have hunted him (they are not, we fancy, many) will be interested to hear how the roe was rated in the palmy days of sport. "If the roe-buck were as fair a beast as a hart," says our author, "I hold that it were a fairer hunting than of the hart, for it is a good hunting and lasteth all the year, and of great mastery, for they run right long and ginnously [craftily] . . . it is a diverse beast for he doth nothing after the manner of any other beast." In fact, it is pretty clear that then, as now, men shrank from the chase of the roe owing to the extreme difficulty of catching him, and to the smallness of his size when caught. Perquisites, it must be remembered, counted for a good deal in the old days, when a large number of prickers, foresters, relay-men and other attendants, both mounted and afoot, were brought into the field. Men would run themselves to a standstill after a good stag, for his death meant venison for all, and for the more fortunate additional welcome spoil.

What shall he have that killed the deer?  
His leather skin and horns to wear.

This is no fanciful jingle but the rhymed record of an ancient custom; and to this day the deer's skin is the huntsman's perquisite in Devon

<sup>1</sup> In the text the word vixen is written indifferently foxen, or fixen (Germ. *Füchsin*).

and Somerset. But it was quite another thing to tire men, horses, and hounds as much as though a stag were a-chase, and finally run into a scrap of a beast without horns, skin, or venison worth the naming.

Another good point in our English adapter is his sceptical common sense. There is no beast in the world to which more legendary virtues are attributed than the stag; partly owing to the tale of St. Hubert, partly to a supposed antipathy of stags towards serpents, partly to a peculiar mass of gristle, in the shape of a cross, which is found in the animal's heart. A whole book might be written on the miraculous power of the hart, and the efficacy of different parts of him against the troubles of this evil world. Fouilloux, in the sixteenth century, gives a long list, and Master Robert Topsel fills page upon page with them; but our author in his solid English fashion is chary of accepting such stories. Men say, he admits, that when a stag is right old he heateth a serpent with his foot till she be wroth, and then eateth her, and then goeth to drink, and then runneth hither and thither till the water and venom be meddled together, and maketh him cast all his evil humours that he had in his body, and maketh his flesh come all new, but, he adds, with the solemnity of Herodotus himself, "thereof make I none affirmation." And this phrase occurs again and again, for the Count of Foix is too great and noble a hunter that any assertion of his should be laughed at.

But it is when he comes to speak of hounds that, like his original before him, he waxes most enthusiastic; and in truth how can any man pretend to call himself a true sportsman who is not fond of hounds? Gaston de Foix says boldly that he never saw man who loved hounds and their work that had not many good customs in him;



“For it cometh to him of great nobleness and gentleness of heart, of what estate soever the man be of, a great lord or a little, a poor or a rich.” And it must be remembered that this Gaston was no mere jolly squire, but a courteous, polished, and accomplished gentleman, who could fight as well as hunt, and loved music and poetry only less than the chase; so that the sentiment, besides that it came first from his mouth, is not the idle commonplace which it sounds to our ears. “An hound,” says our author, “is the most reasonable and best knowing of any beast that ever God made; yea, in some case I neither outtake [except] man nor other thing; for men find so much noblesse in hounds always from day to day that there is no man that may believe it, but he were a good skilful hunter and well-knowing and that hath haunted them long.”

And therewith follow two chosen anecdotes to exhibit the nobleness of hounds; of the faithful dog that, when his master had been basely slain and cast into a river, leaped in and drew out the body with his teeth, and made a great pit with his claws and with his muzzle, “in the best wise that he might,” and watched over the corpse till the king came by; all told as one might tell it to a child, with the simple dignity that almost makes scepticism ashamed. But after all, as our translator has perceived, it is not the reader of anecdotes, nor even the owner of a sagacious favourite, that will best appreciate hounds, but the skilful hunter and well-knowing, who has haunted them long. Hounds are to other dogs what soldiers are to other men; and just as it is in war that men are put to the extreme test, so it is in the chase that hounds show of what stuff they are really made. The sight of a hound rearing on his hind legs to sniff bushes above him which may have been brushed by a deer, is

worth all the anecdotes that ever appeared in *THE SPECTATOR*.

It is hardly to be wondered at, therefore, that almost a third part of our treatise is devoted to hounds, to their kennels, their breeding, and, above all, their ailments. Page upon page is filled with symptoms and disorders and cures, from the seven kinds of rage, or madness, to sore feet. Thus, if a hound be afflicted with the falling woodness,<sup>1</sup> one remedy is to carry him to the sea and let nine waves pass over him, which, though our author opines that it be but little help, is likely to have at least the merit of ending the poor animal's sufferings. Again, hounds are liable to be “malencolious” and to develope mange as a consequence, when a variety of curious mixtures may be compounded to anoint them withal; or, again, they may suffer from throat-evil, in which case buttered eggs are most beneficial. Some of the remedies, especially for more simple diseases, are, as the veterinary surgeon wrote to Geoffrey Gambado, equally efficacious with ‘man or beast; and not a few are in full use to this day. But none the less our author sorrowfully confesses that he cannot overcome the one great failing of hounds, “that they live not long enough.” “What a pity it is,” says Mr. Jorrocks, “that we cannot put new legs to old noses”; and there are few masters of hounds who have not made the same lamentation.

Nevertheless it would seem that the training of hounds was not always very perfect in old days. For instance, it is ordained, when men go forth to chase the hare, that some of the horsemen shall keep outside the hounds to right and left, and some well in front, “with long rods in their hands” to rouse her, and “blow, rechase, halloo, and set the hounds on

<sup>1</sup> German, *Wuth*, madness.

the rights" when they see her. This is reasonable enough, but unfortunately it is not all. "Also they [the men of the long rod] shall keep [take care] that none hound follow after sheep or other beasts, and if they do they shall ascry them sore, and alight and take them up and belash them well, saying loud, 'War, war, ha, ha, war,' and lash them forth to their fellows." What a scene one can conjure up here: the long rods plying busily in every tuft of grass; Puss jumping up out of her form and scudding away amid a storm of blowings and rechasing and halloos, and the pack breaking straight away after the nearest heifer; and then a tempest of galloping and rating, the slow clumsy horses plunging among the peccant pack, and the men pulling them up with a jerk to alight and chastise some flagrant offender; and finally a babel of dismal howls and angry ascribing, as the long rods are shortened to a convenient length and the process of belashing begins.

With all the praise of hounds it is dispiriting to learn that they were sadly degenerate. "A bold hound," we are told, "should not leave the hart neither for wind, nor for rain, neither for heat, neither for cold, neither for none evil weather"; and indeed we should imagine not, "but in this time there are few such." Gaston de Foix, when he saw the hounds of his old age and thought on those that he had seen in his youth, averred that there was no comparison between them; and every man that had "any good reason," of which class, of course, the English translator was bound to reckon himself to be one, declared that he spoke truth. But we must not take this too literally, for Gaston's was a sorrowful old age, since the day when he quarrelled, through another man's treachery, with his son. For one day men brought him word, after the close of a terrible

scene with the poor, innocent boy, "Sir, your son is dead"; and the unhappy man, like David, lifted up his voice and wept, saying, "Ah, Gaston, I shall never have the joy that I had before." No wonder that his hounds seemed to deteriorate after this; it is not often that they are condemned with such good reason.

But if the rules for training hounds were imperfect, those for the training of men were most thorough and sound. If a man is to become a good hunter he must be caught up at the age of seven; it is none too young, for "the craft requireth all a man's life, or he be perfect thereof," and what a man has learned in his youth he will best retain in his age. Two things, then, must first be impressed upon the child, to love his master and to take care of his hounds; and his earliest lesson must be to learn the names and the hues of hounds by rote until he knows them every one. Mr. Jorrocks, it will be remembered, took Benjamin into the kennel and made him call every hound by name, double-thonging him whenever he made a mistake; and so too in the fourteenth century it is ordained that a master must take his pupil and beat him if he will not learn, "into the time that the child shall be adread for to fail." Then he may be taught to clean out the kennel, and when he knows how to take care of hounds at home, he may go abroad with them to field and forest, where he must be deliberate and well-eyed, well advised of his speech and of his terms, and ever glad to learn. Above all, he must be no boaster or jangler, for no hunter should be a herald of his craft. Evidently there were Dick Braggs in the earliest days of sport.

We shall not trouble our readers with a list of the technical terms which the youthful sportsman was expected to master, for they were many and various. It is, however,

satisfactory to find that the word "rights" was used, as it still is, to express the three lowest branches of a stag's head, and that, contrary to the modern French practice, the rights were not taken for granted in summing the number of the points. We look in vain, however, for the words brow, bay, and trey, and we are distressed to find that the foot of both hart and buck is called, not the slot, but the trace. And this, it seems, was the true English word, for our author disclaims all intention of foisting French expressions upon the chase of his native land. "I would," he says, "that English hunters should know something of the terms that hunters use beyond the sea, but not to that intent to call it so in England."

Next the young sportsman must be initiated into the mysteries of harbouring a deer; and to this end his master should have by him the slots of an old stag, a young stag, and a hind, and should imprint them upon the ground, sometimes gently as though the deer was moving slow, sometimes hard as though he were travelling apace, sometimes on dry ground and sometimes on wet, that the pupil may learn the difference between them. So shall he grasp the initial principle that roundness is the characteristic of a male deer's slot, and length of the female's; and that in any case of doubt between a hind and a young male deer, similarity of the sole of the foot must be overlooked, and distinction sought in the breadth of the heel and the inclination of the dew-claws. Moreover, hinds have, like other creatures of their sex, a mincing uncertain gait and a tendency to walk on their toes, while a hart of ten (what we now call a warrantable deer) treads firm and full as becomes his dignity. Lastly the signs of a big stag are a great heel and a broad, a

blunt toe and large, and blunt dew-claws wide apart. There is nothing that we can add after five centuries to the chapter on slots, except that in old deer the claws of the hind feet are generally uneven in length. But the lesson is not yet quite complete. For the pupil after he has learned all these signs must be able to describe them correctly; and even if he has found them all in perfection, he may only say, when questioned at the meet, that "they betoken a great hart and an old." "This is all that he may say of the hart," affirms our author, for a hunter, as aforesaid, must be no boaster nor jangler, nor should he endanger the worth of his opinion by incontinence of speech.

The tokens of the slot once mastered, the pupil is taught next the other marks of a great deer, and learns why it is that old stags choose old trees against which to fray their heads, and break off the branches above them in the process, whereas young stags break off those below them only. Next he must study the lairs of deer and note the size and breadth of their beds, and whether the ground be much indented, or the contrary, by their knees and feet when they rose from them, for by these signs too he may judge if a stag be great or small, heavy or light. Then he must follow the track from the empty bed and note if the "gladness" (glade?) made by the passage of the deer be broad, and the branches broken by his horns high up and wide apart. And if he would know how long it is since the deer passed and have no hound with him to show him, then he may use this pretty little bit of woodcraft: "Set your visage in the midst of the gladness, and keep your breath in the best wise that ye may, and if ye find that the areyn [spider] hath made her web by the middle of them, it is a token that it is of no long time or at

least it is at the middle overcome [afternoon] of the day before."

Finally the young hunter may be sent out with hound in leash, called a lymer (*limier*), to harbour a deer for his lord to chase, a most difficult and delicate task which will tax all his knowledge of woodcraft. For no stag less than a hart of ten may lawfully be hunted; all younger than that age being known as *rascal* or *folly*, and a simple encumbrance to the chase; and therefore a good deer must be found by his slot, the track of him followed with the lymer as far as may be without danger of disturbing him, and his whereabouts ascertained by casting all round, to be sure that he has not gone beyond a certain distance. The lymer is never used in harbouring nowadays in England though he is still employed in France;<sup>1</sup> but in all other respects the proceedings remain the same, and no better directions can be given than those in the pages of this old unprinted book.

Then comes the description of the chase itself with all the well-known tricks and wiles of the wild red deer, as well set forth as it ever has been or will be. "And then," says the writer, warming to his subject, "then hath the hunter joy and great liking when he leapeth on an horseback with a great haste for to follow his hounds; and by chance he shall see the hart pass by him and shall halloo and rout mightily and he shall see which hounds come in the van chase [*avant chasse*] and in the middle, and which be profitours (?), and when his hounds have passed before him, then he shall ride after them, and he shall rout and blow as loud as he may with great joy and great liking." Here is the reward

for the lesson learned in early days in the kennel at the double-thong's end, for the man who knows every hound and the capacity of each derives far more pleasure from hunting than other men, nay, is the only man who knows the full measure of its enjoyment. The packs of those days were doubtless slow, but men did not object to that, for they were of opinion (and not unrightly) that "hounds that be something slow scent the hart better than others that go hastily, without abiding unto the time that they grow weary," and though a stag, not being hard pressed, could stand up the longer, yet that only prolonged the delight of the chase.<sup>2</sup> Moreover there was always plenty of tongue, and men loved the "gallant chiding" which so enraptured Shakespeare.

Last of all, after endless doubles and beating of the water and all the thousand stratagems of the hunted deer, the pursuers by slotting and relaying, but mainly by honest hunting, run up to their stag, and he turns to bay. And then comes such a hullabaloo of horns and halloos and baying hounds as never was heard,—all of it prolonged to the utmost, that every hound and every sportsman may come up before the dealing of the death-stroke. And then the horns changed their note and blew the hart, which etiquette forbade to be blown till that supreme moment; and therewith followed elaborate ceremonies for cleaning the deer and preparing for the worry or, as it was called quarry (*curée*). Finally the master and the gentleman next in rank to him held up the deer's head above the hounds' portion, and "skilfully loud" the master cried out "Dedow" (? Dead ho!), which was the signal for blood-ing the hounds and for a fresh out-

<sup>1</sup> The systems differed in the two countries from very early days. An English envoy, Fitzwilliam, discussed them with Francis the First of France in 1521.—CAL. S.P., vol. iv., I., No. 1160.

<sup>2</sup> Francis the First of France once hunted one for nine hours.—CAL. S.P., vol. iv., I., No. 2136.

burst of noise. "Halloo every wight and every man blow the death" is the order in the book : and they kept on hallooing and blowing, for it was the rule that as often as any man began to blow, the rest should bear him fellowship. Then came a fresh blast for the coupling of the hounds, with a pause of an "Ave Maria while" between the notes, yet another blast when the hounds went home, and a final concert led by the master on arriving at the hall. Thus the whole country-side knew when their lord had killed his deer, and rejoiced accordingly.

Lastly come directions to guide the good hunter when he reaches home. When he has seen to the welfare of his hounds, "he shall do off his clothes and do off his shoon and his hosen, and he shall wash his thighs and his feet and his legs, and peradventure all his body." *Peradventure* we take to indicate special occasions only, for our author does not add, according to his wont, that the process of washing is "great joy and liking." The ablutions ended, however, whether partial or complete, the hunter may look to his supper, and having well eaten and drunk may take a short turn in the air, and then "go lie in his bed in fair fresh clothes, where he shall sleep well and steadfastly all the

night without any evil thought of any sin."

Such is the simple close of the day's sport,—to sleep, lulled by the remembered music of horn and hound. And how those old sportsmen loved that music ! Gaston de Foix, who was a great musician, attempts in the poem that closes his treatise to reduce it to a kind of vocal score. And we, too, will essay to turn it into doggerel rhyme, which, bad as it may be, we can honestly assure our readers can be no worse than Gaston's.

Therewith there rose up such a cry  
That ne'er man heard such melody.  
Not in the chapel of the king,  
Whenas his choirs their anthems sing  
With introit and antiphon—  
Sweetest of human music known—  
Can men such joyful chorus hear  
As at the hunting of the deer.  
For every hound sings in his place :  
The greatest hounds intone the bass ;  
The next sing out, with all their hearts,  
Tenor and counter-tenor parts ;  
They next, that have their voices shrill,  
Pipe treble forth with right good will ;  
And loud the little bitches chant  
Octave of fourth and dominant.  
By semitones they rise and fall,  
And all join in the chorus, all.  
The king he heard their cry upborne,  
Swift to his lips he clapped his horn,  
And sparing neither wind nor pain  
He blew and blew and blew again.  
Oh, merriest of all merry sounds,  
The diapason of the hounds !



A TOURIST TICKET.<sup>1</sup>

"Dost forget, brother, that it is the Fast?" said Raheem, as with gentle, determined hand he pushed the leaf-cup of sweets further from the board on which his tools lay. There were not many of them, though the inlaid work upon the sandal-wood comb he was making showed delicate as lace. It suited the delicate hands employed upon it; in a way also it suited the delicate brain behind the high narrow forehead, which had a look of ill-health about the temples, where the thick, coarse black hair was also delicately streaked with silver, sure sign, in a land where grayness is long deferred, of a troubled body or mind. Raheem had barely touched middle age; in his case the trouble seemed in both body and mind, to judge by his hollow eyes and the expression in them as they rested on a younger man, who sate, as a visitor, on the plinth of the comb-maker's shop. His feet were in the gutter, and his handsome head was nodding gaily to various acquaintances in the steady stream of passers-by, for the odd little shop was wedged into the outer angle of a sharp bend in the narrow bazaar, so that as Raheem sate working at his scented combs he could see both ways, could see all the world coming and going from dawn till dark.

Hoshyar laughed, nodding his handsome head once more: "Yea! I forgot that thou dost fast for both of us, and pray for both of us. Mayhap in the end, brother, thou mayest have to go to Paradise for both of us, despite all thy pains."

The busy hand ceased to work in a gesture of negation. "Say not such

things, Hoshyar. We go together, or go not at all. Thou knowest that was my promise to the dead."

Hoshyar ate another comfit before replying with a shrug of the shoulders: "'Twas not on stamped paper, though, and promises are naught nowadays without it. 'Tis bad policy to be over-pious, brother. As all know, the saint's beard goes in relics, and to tell truth, I would be better pleased to leave Paradise to those who wish for it. The world suits me. I was not born to be religious, as thou wert."

The comb-maker looked at him with a sort of perplexed patience. "God knows His own work," he said in a low voice. "The Potter makes; the World fills. I remember when thou first wentest to school, Hoshyar, how thou didst weep because it prevented thee from prayer-time. And at the festivals,—dost remember, brother, thou hadst a little coat of brocade? Mother cut it from our father's old one she cherished so——"

"Old tales, old tales!" interrupted Hoshyar, rising with another shrug of his shoulders. "If thou hadst wished me to continue in them, why didst send me to school to learn new ones? Why didst not make me a comb-carver instead of a clerk? Then might I have saved money, as thou hast, gone on the great pilgrimage, as thou hast, and worn a green turban like thine to show it, as thou dost——"

A sharp spasm of pain swept over the older man's face, but there was anger also in his voice. "As thou wouldst have done also, clerk though thou art, if——"

"Yea, I know, I know!" inter-

<sup>1</sup> Copyright in the United States.

rupted Hoshyar, impatiently; "if I had not emptied the bag so often. But 'tis a pity to let money lie idle. And that time thou hadst the sum needed for the journey, I would have gone. I meant to have gone,—I swear it; but the leave failed, and thou wouldst not, surely, have had me give up my post? Then, ere the leave came, the money had gone. I can never keep it lying idle, and so——"

Raheem's anger faded, leaving nothing but the pain. What use was there in finishing the sentence, in reproaching the sinner with having done far worse than let good money lie idle? The fact only made the pilgrimage a greater necessity than ever, if Nakir and Munkir, the recording angels, were to be bribed to leniency. "Thou shalt have the green turban yet," he said quietly, "if thou wilt have patience. But my combs are not like Peera's over the way: he makes a dozen to my one; ay, and sells them, too, for folk buy ever the cheapest thing nowadays even for an Eed-offering."<sup>1</sup>

There was almost an incredulous wonder in his voice as he went on working, while Hoshyar stood kicking one patent leather shoe viciously against a loose brick in the pavement. "And in the meantime the future pilgrim must live," he remarked jestingly, as if, even to his effrontery, it was easier to treat what he had to say thus, than in earnest. "So if thou couldst spare a rupee or two from the bag, Raheem,——" His brother's eyes looked up, full of reproach. "I know what thou wouldst say," he went on pettishly. "I have had more than my share this month; but I need it sorely. The skinflints at the office have cut my pay for being late,—as if I could help the tram-car passing full five minutes before its time—so I

had to walk. And then the mixed train, which is ever an hour late, chose to be punctual; so there was none to receive the waybills." He paused, and seeing the doubt on Raheem's face, continued: "As for the combs, if thou hast difficulty in selling, I might try. That one thou madest last with jasmine flowers in ivory,—'tis a deft piece of work, and I know one who might buy it."

"Not Yasmeena?" asked Raheem, his face hardening, despite the girl-like flush which came to it.

Hoshyar laughed uneasily. "Thou hast Yasmeena on thy brain, brother. She is no worse than others of her trade, and that will last till all men are of thy way of thinking. Yasmeena! Nay, thou knowest she hath not the money to pay for such costly gew-gaws, for she is not as the others, now; she is not to be bought or sold herself."

A man more of the world than Raheem, noting the change of tone in the last words, would have augured much of Yasmeena's power over the speaker; but the comb-maker was too simple for such wisdom. "If she buys it not, well and good," he replied, relaxing his frown; "but I will lend myself to no truck between thee and her. And as for the rupees——" He sighed, yet there was no hesitation in the hands which began to unlock a brass-bound box lying beside his board. "Thou wouldst rise earlier, brother," he continued, almost tenderly, as he counted three rupees from a little bag into the outstretched palm awaiting the gift, "if thou wouldst sleep a little earlier also. Lo! I sleep and wake with the birds, since my work must be of the light."

It streamed full upon him and his tools as he spoke, a pale gold flame of sunshine, searching for each flaw, each failure.

"Couldst not make it five, Raheem?"

<sup>1</sup> Equivalent to our Easter.

came the sordid voice. "That is bare bread."

The flame of the sunshine had found a resting place in Raheem's eyes as he looked at the beggar from head to foot. "And this is salvation," he replied, dropping the bag back into the box with a chink, and turning the key upon it.

Salvation! Yes, that is what it really meant to Raheem. It meant salvation for one soul; but for which? After his brother had gone he asked himself this question for the hundredth time, asked it almost feverishly. Ought he to trust to the chance? Was it likely that he would have time ere his life ended,—that life which had always been so uncertain—to make provision for both himself and Hoshyar in death? It would not do to trust Hoshyar with the money. He, Raheem, must make the pilgrimage for him; and was it likely when the rupees came so slowly and went so fast that the hoard in the bag would be complete for years? Ought he not then to make over, as according to the canon, he could do if he chose, the virtue of that past pilgrimage to his brother, and take the risk of the coming one upon himself? Hoshyar needed it sorely, and yet the very thought of going forth to the Judgment-Seat without the panoply in which for long years he had found peace and shelter was a terror to Raheem. Could he do it? Nay, it was too much; and yet,—if that promise to the dead were broken wilfully, what good would imputed righteousness be before the Throne?

And meanwhile Hoshyar his brother, a clerk in the railway, sate smoking a vile cigar at the feet of Yasmeena, who, lounging on a string bed, was drawing the scented sandal-wood comb, inlaid with the flowers whose name she bore, through her sleek hair. "Give it me, beloved," she said scornfully; "then thy

promise to the saint will be secure. I must have it; 'tis the prettiest in the bazaar; even Gulanâri, with all her airs, has not its marrow. See, I will sell it to her when I tire of it, and then thou canst give back his three rupees to the miser. Three rupees! I shall spend that in a day. And Monday is the Eed. I must have a new gown for it, or——"

She did not finish her sentence, but her look was eloquent; and Hoshyar, as he lay awake that night, her meaning driven home by hints of coming coldness, racked his brains for some means of procuring the dress. Raheem meanwhile lay awake also, thinking of a very different costume; of a robe of righteousness, a wedding-garment. Those three rupees given to Hoshyar had been meant for an Eed-offering, the Eed which drew so near. There was no time to earn more. Should he go empty-handed to give thanks for the added virtue of having been granted life to keep the Great Fast, or should he offer up his pilgrimage by making it over once and for all to his brother?

Hoshyar had been asleep for hours, and the sparrows were astir ere Raheem found any answer. He would wait another day, he told himself, before deciding; so he sate in the sunlight seeking perfection in his delicate curves and lines, while the pale gold rays peeped and pried for flaws and failures.

"Have you a comb like that, finished?" asked a foreign voice, making him raise his head and salaam hopefully.

"None so good, Huzoor; but I have others." He took them from the brass-bound box and waited; then noting the Englishman's look, said wistfully: "I had one yesterday, but it,—it is gone. I could finish this one quickly for the Huzoor if,—if he pleased." There was a catch in his

breath. If he could sell something, surely he might keep salvation a little longer.

"Can you finish it by Monday evening?"

It would mean working extra hours, mean working through the Festival when all the world rested; but what was that in comparison with the reward? Ten minutes afterwards Raheem was putting three rupees into the bag. He had sold out his stock, and, still more wonderful, had a promise of twenty rupees more on account for future work if he brought the comb punctually on the Monday evening. He had not done such a business for years. The Eed-offering was secure, and the chances of his hoard reaching the necessary amount for a speedy pilgrimage doubled.

The sun shone brighter and purer than ever on the crowds assembled in the Eedgâh,—a huge enclosure, set with trees and with a mere façade of a mosque upon its western front, which lay beyond the city walls. It shone on no more brilliant figure than Yasmeena's, who, in the gayest of new dresses, was saying her prayers effusively; for if the daily life be doubtful, there is all the more need to have the full advantage of festivals; a theory which obtains all over the world. But Raheem, despite his green turban of the Passed Pilgrim, despite the three rupees given scrupulously in charity to his neighbour, felt glad to escape, when prayers were over, to his work. And yet the sight was one to stir most hearts: the long lines of men, women, and children,—thousands and thousands and thousands of them—half-seen amid the shading trees; the boom of the firework-signal from the eastern gate echoing like a cannon from the wide walls, and ending in a silence like the grave; fifty thousand living, breathing beings

shoulder to shoulder, and not a sound, not a quiver; only the swish of a bird's wings, only the hush of a breeze among the leaves. Then suddenly came a great shout as from one throat, and the long lines bent like a field of corn before a mighty wind. "God is great; there is no God but God!"

And afterwards he had been used, wifeless, childless himself, to wander with kindly eyes among the merry family parties picnicking beneath the trees, watching the little ones' delight over their new toys, the old men's delight over their grandchildren. Then, often, he would hear folk say in a whisper: "Look at his turban! He is a Hâjji; he has been to Mecca. Look, children, he has found salvation. God grant you to follow in his steps!" But on this Eed he took off the sign of saintship ere he began work; yet as he worked he shivered as if he were cold without it.

The weight of the twenty rupees, however, which, when the comb was finished and taken to the Sahib at the hotel, were duly paid into his hand, seemed to make his heart feel lighter. It meant two months work, and that meant two months' food. Then Hoshyar must have at least five rupees. Still enough would remain to bring the hoard in the brass-bound box within measurable distance of salvation, to make it possible perhaps for him to wear his green turban without a heart-ache. His present lack of the distinguishing mark seemed to strike even the Englishman's eye, making him say kindly: "I thought you wore the green, and you look the sort certainly; if not I have something which may interest you. Here, Baboo, one of those leaflets, please. If you want to hear more, go to the address of the Agency. I'm off to-night."

Raheem, with a salaam, tucked the little printed page into his common-

place white headgear and trudged homewards, tired and dispirited. It was too dark to begin work again as a distraction, and he had not had the heart, somehow, to prepare himself a feast as on other Eeds; so, bethinking him of the leaflet in his turban, he took it out and began to read. It was in the Arabic lettering of the Holy Book he knew so well, and his eyes were keen; still the wording puzzled him. A pilgrimage to Mecca,—exceptional opportunity,—specially chartered vessel,—Firmân,—absolute orthodoxy guaranteed,—to start in a month's time,—a limited number of tickets available at Moulvie Futteh-deen's, near the mosque, Imambarah bazaar. Briefly, it was the prospectus of a pilgrimage, which was being organised as a speculation by a well-known firm, whose travelling agent combined the business with a private venture of his own in all the artistic productions he could pick up by the way; whence came the purchase of Raheem's combs.

"Thou hast the way-bill, I see, Hâjji," came a cracked, wistful voice, as an old man who was passing paused at the plinth; an older man even than his looks, for the sparse beard was palpably dyed, and his dress still had a youthful jauntiness about it. His face, however, betrayed him by its wrinkles. He carried a huge *dhol* (a kind of drum) slung by a cord about his neck, and as he spoke his lissom fingers slid and curved over the stretched goat-skin making a muffled, trembling boom. "Not that it means aught to thee," he went on in a grumble to match. "Thou hast the ticket to Paradise already. Would I had it also! I go no nearer it, yet, than damning myself by playing to profligates, and so putting by a nest-egg against my desire. How else, since drum-banging is my trade, and drums ever keep bad company? But I

grow old, I grow old. Thus the sin is greater to a soul which should have learned wisdom; but the pay is less by reason of fingers growing stiff. So I am wicked both ways, and ere next year's pilgrimage this empty maw of a thing may have swallowed me up, body and soul." He gave a more vicious knuckling to the drum, which hummed and boomed in response.

"Next year's?" echoed Raheem.

"Ay; it comes every year, they say. There was a man at Gulanâri's,—God knows, neighbour, I must burn if I die in such company, and I so old! 'Tis the drum drags me to it—seest thou! it will play naught but dance-tunes, though I swear I am weary of them as a lame squirrel with her nest in the sky. I would play hymns, but that I am hindered; and a man's belly, Hâjji Raheem, will not stay empty as a drum and not shrink; so—"

"About the pilgrimage," suggested Raheem, knowing the drum-player's talk of old.

"Ay, ay, for sure! The man,—a saint for all his company—there, seest thou, is the pull of it. Had I but the green turban, this devil of a drum might take me where it would. But as I was saying, this man said it was true, every word. He had been and returned comfortably for the money."

"For so little," murmured Raheem, looking once more at the price named. It was far less than what his previous experience told him would be required.

"Little!" echoed the drum-banger, reproachfully. "That comes of making decent combs. Didst thou try to wheedle salvation from a thing that hath neither heart nor bowels of compassion, that is naught but a devil of a noise that grows worse instead of better when 'tis whacked, thou wouldst tell a different tale. Well, the cat, says the proverb,



killed seventy rats and went on a pilgrimage, so I must wait my turn, though if I have not more than seventy sins, may I never play a measure again. I swarm with them, neighbour, as flies on sugar." He tucked the tempter further under his arm, and moved on, muttering to himself: "And I have but half the money saved, so I am lost if I get not virtue on a reduction."

Raheem sat looking at the paper stupidly, as the mingled growl of the drum and its beater died away. Then suddenly those delicate hands of his reached out swiftly to the brass-bound box. Surely he had so much, or would have so much when those twenty rupees were earned. So every minute of the light found him at work on the scented combs, and whenever he finished one, he spent some of his scanty rest in toiling over to the Imambarâh bazaar, and paying over its fairly-earned price to swell the deposit which secured to him one of the limited supply of tickets. Finally on one night, the very night before the day of starting, he packed up the combs complete, took the price of the last one over to the Moulvie, and received in return a neat little booklet full of incomprehensible printed papers. He felt almost afraid of his new possession, with its gay tie to keep everything in its place within the cover. He might lose something and find himself stranded. He broke out at the thought into a cold sweat, and hunted hurriedly for the extra ticket which the Moulvie had told him was to be used to the junction, since the railway which passed through the town was not on the direct line. He found it, an ordinary third class ticket, tucked away safely; but the fright made him resolve on keeping it separate and hanging the precious remainder in a bag round his neck.

The empty money-bag would do; or better still, there were some bits left yet of Hoshyar's little coat of brocade, and the ticket deserved a fine holder.

As he sat stitching away at the familiar fragments, however, by the flicker of the cresset, a certain remorse assailed him at having seen so little of his brother during the past month. True, Hoshyar, for various reasons, preferred coming to see him; but ever since the Eed Raheem had been dimly conscious that something seemed to have come between him and the soul he meant to save. Was it that he knew in his heart it ought to be already saved? There was no longer any need, however, for such questions. So soon as the bag was finished he would go over and find Hoshyar; would find and tell him the great secret, the secret which even Raheem's small store of worldly wisdom had kept jealously.

A sound at the plinth made him look up, and there was Hoshyar himself. Something in his face made the sewer say quickly: "I set aside the money for thee, Hoshyar, though thou camest not. It is here, five rupees."

Hoshyar looked at the little pile with a queer expression, and leaving the plinth came within the reach of a whisper. "That will not serve me to-night," he said quietly. "I must have thirty."

"Thirty!" echoed Raheem. "I have it not."

"Thou hast it in the box. See here, brother, thou hast told me ever the money was mine, for my salvation. Well, I need it; I must have it." He spoke almost carelessly as one who has a certainty of succeeding; and in truth he thought so. Once before Raheem had almost emptied the bag to save him from ruin, and he had calculated deliberately on its being emptied again when he had bought Yasmeena her new dress out of office-

funds which would have to be replaced at the end of the month. Raheem would not have given a pice for such a purpose, of course ; but with detection and disgrace staring his brother in the face it would be different. Besides, the money was his, for his salvation. "Listen, Raheem," he went on, summoning up a penitential tone ; but his brother interrupted him swiftly, a sort of dread in his dark, hollow eyes. "There is naught in the box now, brother," he said, with a catch of fear in his voice. "I have naught but this ;" he laid his hand lightly upon the booklet, and its very touch seemed to bring comfort, for he smiled. "'Tis my salvation, Hoshyar, for I have given thee my pilgrimage. See, I am making a holder for it. Dost recognise the stuff ? 'Tis a bit of the little brocade coat, brother."

Hoshyar had caught up the booklet, glanced at it, and now flung it down with a passionate oath. "Salvation, — fool, 'tis perdition !" Then he laughed suddenly, a loud, bitter laugh. "That is an end," he said rising to go. "I only waste time here. Good-bye, Raheem ; 'tis well thou hast a keepsake of me ; thou art not likely to see much of me these seven years to come."

"What dost mean, brother ?" began the comb-maker, fearfully ; but Hoshyar, without another word, turned back to the bazaar.

"'Tis thou that art the fool," said Yasmeena, with a yawn, after Hoshyar had raged for a quarter of an hour of his ill-luck, of his brother's foolery, of her extravagance. "Why didst not take the ticket ? It must be worth something, surely ?" Then a sudden interest came to her languid eyes, where vice itself seemed weary. "Seest thou, beloved, I have an idea ! Old Deena the drum-player is for ever talking of second-hand salvation. He hath forty rupees saved for it ; that

would leave me ten as commission. He need not know ; I can say I got it ; we of the bazaar get most things at times in our profession. And the money was thine,—for thy salvation, remember."

Hoshyar looked at her as a man looks at a venomous snake he has no power to kill.

"Lo, Babooji !" said a trollop of a girl, lounging in with a giggle. "Thy brother Raheem asks for thee below. 'Tis the first time, methinks, he hath entered such a house, for he stands like a child, clasping a brocaded bag as if there were pests about, and it held camphor."

Yasmeena sate up among her quilts and looked at Hoshyar. "Bid the good creature to the courtyard at the back," she said in a level voice. "Thou wilt like to see him alone, doubtless, Hoshyar. And, Merun, bid some man take him a sherbet ; he would be affrighted of a houri. Make it of sandal-essence, girl, and bring it to me to see that it is rightly flavoured. Thou likest not sandal-essence, Hoshyar, 'tis true, but 'tis most refreshing to those who have walked, and thou needst not touch it."

Hoshyar's look changed. It was the look now which a bird gives to the snake.

Raheem was at the station next day in plenty of time, though, rather to his surprise, he had slept later than usual that morning, and slept heavily also ; perhaps because he seemed not to have a care left in the world after Hoshyar had retracted all his reproaches and bidden him go in peace. Peace,—what else could remain in a man's heart after that renunciation in the dark deserted mosque upon the homeward way, which had left Raheem's conscience clear at last, left him without a wedding garment and yet

content? And now, with his ticket to the junction duly snipped, his bundle in one hand and the other assuring itself of the booklet's safety in the brocade bag, he passed down the platform in the rear of the rush from the waiting-shed, looking diffidently for a seat in the close-packed carriages, which with their iron bars and struggling occupants looked like cages of wild beasts.

"Here, neighbour Hâjji, here!" cried a cracked, familiar voice full of elation, full of importance. "Now that demon of a drum hath gone there is room for a saint or two. He is Hâjji already, my masters, and will be a good companion. But 'tis done cheaper nowadays, and I, I swear, have it cheaper than ye all. How much, is a secret; but the Lord kept his eye on old Deena." So he went on boastfully, till even his voice was drowned in the great shout which went up as the train moved on. He was back on his own good fortune, however, when the hundred and fifty and odd passengers in their carriage, separated into scores by iron bars, had subsided into a mere babel of speaking voices. "No cover, say you?" he replied resentfully to a captious criticism on his ticket. "What good is a cover? Dew is pretty, but it don't quench thirst; so I, being a pilgrim, drink plain water. My ticket will take me as far as thine."

Raheem, crouched up between the drum-player and a fat butcher, heard vaguely, and fingered the outline of his treasure in its bag of brocade, feeling glad he had so honoured it; for it took him further than Mecca, further than this world. The Gates of Pearl were set ajar for him, and he could see through them to the glory and glitter of Paradise. And so, after a rush through a long stretch of desert sand, the train slackened, rousing him from a dream. This must be the junction, and he must take out the

other ticket; but not while a score of folk were struggling over him in their rush to be out first. He was out last, of course, and had barely time to snatch the booklet from its bag, ere an official warned him to hurry up. So panting, confused, his bundle in one hand, his treasure in the other, he sped over the bridge to the next platform.

"Tickets, tickets, all tickets!" came another alien voice, and he paused to obey, setting his bundle on the ground in order to have both hands for his task. But the opening of the cover was to him as the closing of the Book of Life; for it was empty.

"Pass on, pass on!" came the not unkindly voice of command once more. "Out of the way, you there, and don't stand like a fool. You've dropped it likely; run back and see; there's time yet."

So over the bridge again went Raheem, in frantic hope, back on his steps again in frantic despair. "I had it, Huzoor, indeed I had it! Here is the cover!"

The ticket-collector shook his head, and Raheem, with a dazed look, turned away quietly.

"Trra!" came the voice of the drum-player sententiously and safely from the window of a carriage. "He hath lost the inside; that comes of a cover. Well, well, prayers are over; up with the carpet! But he is Hâjji already, my masters, so 'tis not as though it were one of us sinners."

"Keep thy sins to thyself, chatterer," retorted his next neighbour tartly, as the train moved on. "We be virtuous men enough."

"If you haven't money to go on, you must go back. The booking-office is over there, and the up-mail will be in in a few hours."

This official view of the question given by the authorities as they

gathered round the disappointed pilgrim was simplicity itself, even to Raheem. He never thought of connecting his ticketless cover with Deena's coverless ticket. The fact that his chance was gone absorbed him utterly; he had lost salvation, for the very thought of taking back his gift to Hoshyar was impossible to him. That was the outcome of it all. So he sat patiently waiting for his train to come in, sat patiently, after he had found a place in it, waiting for it to go on, so absolutely absorbed in his loss, that he did not even hear his neighbours' comments on the delay.

"Line clear at last!" said the guard joyfully to the driver as he came out of the telegraph-office, where but one instant before the welcome signal had echoed. "Steam away all you know, sonny, and make up lost time. I promised my girl to be punctual; there's a hop on at her house."

So, with a shriek, they were off for a twenty-mile scamper across the desert; out, with a bump over the points, out with a whistle past the last signal, out with a flash by the telegraph-posts. But something else was flashing by the posts also; for a message came clicking into the station they had left not a minute ago, "*Mistake—line blocked—down-mail.*"

"My God!" said the station-master in a thick voice, standing up blindly. He was an old Mutiny man, but he was white as a sheet.

"It isn't our fault, father," began his son, a slim young fellow, showing mixed blood.

"D—n it all, sir," shouted the other furiously, "what does it matter whose fault it is? What's to be done?"

Nothing could be done, save to telegraph back quick as kind nature could carry it: "*Line blocked—up-mail also.*" Fateful words! The line blocked both

ways, and not a signal for twenty miles! Half an hour of warning at the least, and nothing to be done; nothing save to accept the disaster.

"Bring up the relief-engine sharp, Smith," said the Traffic Superintendent when, ere a minute was past, the hopeless news reached him. "Graham, run over for Dr. Westlake, for Harrison, too, if he's there; splints, bandages, dressers, and all that. Davies, wire back to the other end to send what they can from their reserve."

And so, swiftly as hands and brains could compass it, two more engines fled shrieking into the growing dusk of evening behind those two, the down-mail and the up-mail, coming nearer and nearer to each other on the single line.

"Twenty minutes since they started, about," said one man, who was standing with a watch in his hand, in curiously quiet tones. "It must be soon now; and there is a curve about the middle. I hope to God there is no friend of mine in either!"

"Royston's in the down," replied another studiously even voice. "He was going to see his wife. But the firsts are well back; it's the thirds, poor devils——" He paused, and the others nodded.

The thirds, doubtless! And in one of them, far forward, crouched Raheem, staring out into the calm dusk, absorbed in the horror of going back, going back to die before he had saved his own soul!

So, suddenly, through and above the rush and the roar and the rattle that he scarcely heard, came a new sound forcing him to listen. It was a quivering, clamorous, insistent whistle. It brought no recognition to his ignorance, or to the ignorance of those around him, but far back in the first-class carriages white faces peered out into the gloom and foreign voices

called to each other : " Danger whistle — what's up ? " Still, it was a strange, disturbing sound with a strange echo. And was that an echo of the rush, and the roar, and the rattle ? Raheem sat up quickly. Was it the end of all things ? Why had they struck him — who — Hoshyar ! Then thought ended in a scream of pain.

" There is a man caught by the feet under that wheel," said Dr. Westlake not many minutes after, as he came out of the hideous pile of wreckage all grimed and smirched. " He is breathing yet, so have him out sharp. We may save him, but these others — " He passed on to seek work significantly.

And so Raheem, stunned and with both feet crushed to a jelly, was dug out ; the only man left alive in the forward third-class carriage of the up-mail. He was still unconscious when it came to be his turn for the doctors in the crowded hospital. " Badly nourished," said Dr. Westlake, " but it is his only chance. Harrison, the eucalyptus sawdust, please ; it is a good case for it, and we shall be short of dressings."

So two days afterwards Raheem, recovering from a slight concussion of the brain, found himself in a strangely comfortable bed with a curious hump of a thing over his feet under the coverlet. He did not know that there were no feet there ; that they had both been amputated at the ankle, and that he was a cripple for life. And there was no reason why he should find it out, since the sawdust did its work without more ado, much to the doctor's delight, who, as he took Raheem's temperature, talked of first intents and septic dressings to his assistant.

In fact, they were both so pleased that it came upon them by surprise one day, when Raheem, with clasped hands, asked when he was to die.

" Die ? Rubbish ! " said Dr. Westlake, cheerfully. " Not from this, at any rate, and we will do what we can for the lungs afterwards."

Raheem's face did not lose its anxiety. " And when, if the Huzoor will say, shall I be able to walk again ? " As he lay in the comfortable bed he had been making up his mind to sacrifice all comfort, to leave life behind him, and start on foot for death, with his face towards Mecca.

" Walk ? " echoed the doctor, with a significant look at his assistant. Then he sat down on the edge of the cot, and told the truth.

Raheem heard it, looking incredulously at the cradle ; and then suddenly he interrupted a platitude about its being better to be a cripple than to die, with an eager question : " Then the Huzoor means that I shall never be able to walk again ? "

The doctor nodded.

" May God reward the Huzoor for ever and ever," said Raheem in a whisper, raising both hands in a salute ; and his face was one radiant smile.

Dr. Westlake looked at his assistant as they passed on to the next cot. " They are an incomprehensible people," he said in rather an injured tone. " I never expected to hear a man thank me rapturously for cutting off both his feet."

He did not know that cripples are specially exempted from the duty of pilgrimage, and that the patient was repeating his version of the text : " It is better to enter halt into life, than, having two feet, to be cast into hell."



## WANTED—A DEAD LETTER OFFICE.

THE Trustees of the British Museum have followed the prevailing fashion and published a volume of letters.<sup>1</sup> The volume differs in many respects from those with which we have of late grown perhaps somewhat too familiar. For one thing, it is much shorter, yet it covers a much longer period of time; for another, it is not concerned with the exhibition of a single personality, nor with a single range of interests. More than three centuries have passed since the earliest of these letters was written; the last is dated just ten years ago. Through all that time the hands which penned them were making history busily, each in its own degree and after its own fashion; the hands of great sovereigns and statesmen, of great captains and churchmen, men of action, men of affairs, men of letters. A queen heads the roll, and a queen closes it. The first letter was written by Queen Katherine of Arragon to her husband Henry, then warring in France; it is dated from Woburn on the 16th of September, 1513, just one week after Surrey had crushed the Scottish power at Flodden, and one month after Henry had, himself routed the French chivalry on the memorable Field of Spurs. The last, dated from Windsor Castle on the 16th of March, 1885, was written by Queen Victoria to the sister of Charles Gordon.

It is impossible, now and here, to give any adequate idea of the contents of this interesting volume, nor indeed should it be necessary; it may be

<sup>1</sup> FACSIMILES OF ROYAL, HISTORICAL, LITERARY, AND OTHER AUTOGRAPHS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MANUSCRIPTS, BRITISH MUSEUM. Printed by Order of the Trustees, London, 1895.

bought, at the Museum or elsewhere, for the moderate sum of six shillings (just one-fourth of what we are asked to pay for the privilege of reading the correspondence of the brothers Rossetti), while any single letter may be purchased for threepence. Some of them the visitor may already have read, through a glass darkly, as they lie in the cases ranged about the small gallery between the Grenville and the King's libraries; and summaries of them are given in the admirable little guide to the Department of Manuscripts lately printed by order of the Trustees. In this volume, the first of a promised series, the curious reader may study the very handwriting of these departed worthies; and in some of the earlier letters he will not find it, we may add, a very simple study, though, as every one who has worked among our State Papers knows, the secret of these old vanished hands is one easily mastered. The copies in this volume are lithographed, or photographed, or reproduced by some other process, in facsimile of the original manuscript; and herein lies, we may say, our only cause of complaint against the Trustees. The process of reproduction, whatever it may be, allows only one side of a page to be copied, and this in many cases, of course, materially diminishes the interest and value of the copy. Might not the facsimile of a part have been supplemented, where necessary, by a reprint of the whole? The cost of the volume would have been slightly increased, no doubt; but another shilling or two would hardly be grudged, we fancy, by those who care for such curiosities. Indeed, as matters go, the Trustees

seem almost convicted out of their own mouths of some little oversight. These autographs, they plead, properly considered are much more than mere curiosities. The full number of those at present exhibited to the public, from which this volume has been selected, amounts to upwards of one hundred, and have been chosen with a view to direct attention, so far as possible, to the leading events and most prominent persons in each reign. "The student is thus enabled to follow English history, at least in outline, in the actual handwriting of those who have most largely contributed to make it; and it would be easy to pick out plates from the present instalment which might profitably be used as texts or illustrations for historical lectures, and which, if shown to an intelligent audience, would invest the subject treated with new interest and vitality." It may be so; yet the idea seems at first painfully suggestive of the University Extension System, and that, as we all know, has opened a door to the random chatterer which will hardly be closed in our time. And surely the vitality to be borrowed from such fragmentary illustrations as some of these are will be no great thing, and the interest in many cases rather tantalizing than otherwise. This seems, we must own, likely to stand a little in the way of the higher purpose claimed for these autographs. But we may be wrong; much will obviously depend on the intelligence of the audience, more on the intelligence of the lecturer. Professor Huxley could work wonders, it is said, with a bone; and what a piece of chalk in skilful fingers will effect on a black board is within universal recollection.

At all events, and whether they or we be proved right, we have no wish to cavil at the Trustees. They have at least put within our easy reach a collection of extremely interesting

curiosities, and for that we should all be grateful. They may prove to have also a great educational value, and then our gratitude will be proportionately increased. Meanwhile they are something much more than curious in the vulgar sense. They are literally touches of vanished hands, which in their time wrought great things, helping to mould the destinies, to direct the thoughts, or to increase the gaiety of our nation. They are a part, as it were, of the national patrimony, in which we may all claim our share. What Englishman, for example, would view unconcerned the written words (*ipsissima verba*, indeed, though we have taken the liberty of transcribing them according to the modern notions of orthography) of that famous Council of War which met in the cabin of the Admiral's flagship on the 1st of August, 1588, the evening after the action off Gravelines?

We, whose names are hereunder written, have determined and agreed in council to follow and pursue the Spanish fleet until we have cleared our own coast and brought the Frith west of us, and then to return back again, as well to revictual our ships (which stand in extreme scarcity), as also to guard and defend our own coast at home; with further protestation that, if our want of victual and munition were supplied, we would pursue them to the furthest that they durst have gone.

And then follow the signatures of these doughty captains: Charles, Lord Howard of Effingham, High Admiral of England; Lord Thomas Howard, his cousin; George, Earl of Cumberland; Edmund, Lord Sheffield; Sir Francis Drake, Sir John Hawkins, Sir Edward Hoby, Captain Thomas Fenner,—all as large as life, as the saying goes, and some of them almost as unintelligible. Of the same complexion, too, yet touched with a more personal interest, is the last letter written by Nelson, dated on board the *Victory*, October 19th, 1805, and bearing a

postscript added on the eve of the battle. It is clear enough to read, for the left hand had soon mastered the trick of penmanship. "In the morning," runs the postscript, "we were close to the mouth of the streights, but the wind had not come far enough to the westward to allow the combined fleets to weather the shoals off Trafalgar [*sic*]; but they were counted as far as forty sail of ships of war, which I suppose to be thirty-four of the line and six frigates. A group of them was seen off the Lighthouse of Cadiz this morning, but it blows so very fresh and thick weather that I rather believe they will go into the harbour before night. May God Almighty give us success over these fellows and enable us to get a Peace." The letter, addressed to Lady Hamilton, was found on his desk after the battle, and brought to her by Hardy, as an endorsement in her Ladyship's own scrawl bears witness.

The hand of sturdy Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester, may be read in an argument against the doctrines of purgatory, with Henry's comments thereon. "The founding of monasteries," writes the Bishop, "argued purgatory to be, so the putting of them down argueth it not to be. What uncharitableness and cruelty seemeth it to be to destroy monasteries if purgatory be. Now it seemeth not convenient the act of parliament to preach one thing and the pulpit another clean contrary." Whereon the King somewhat shrewdly comments: "Why then do you so? *Turpe enim est doctori cum culpa redarguit eum* (it is a scandal for the teacher to stand condemned out of his own mouth)."

The two rival queens are both represented here, Elizabeth of England and Mary of Scotland. Mary prided herself on her handwriting, and as penmanship

then went, with some reason. There is no difficulty in deciphering her letter to Elizabeth, praying that the rigour of her confinement may be relaxed, that a priest of her own faith may be sent to her, and that she may be permitted to write at least an open letter to her son, to remind him of his unhappy mother (*et luy ramentevoir sa triste mere*). It is dated October 29th, 1571, *de mon estroite prison de Chefeld* (Lord Shrewsbury's castle of Sheffield) and signed *Votre bien bonne sœur et [cousine] MARIE R.* Elizabeth's letter is dated two and thirty years later, within two months of her own death, when the Daughter of Debate had been long in her grave, and her little son (*son seul enfant et esperance de future joye en ce monde*) had grown to a man of middle age. It is written to him, in that fantastic strain of unreality which, as Froude says, she carried even into the presence of the Almighty, to clear his mind of certain charges brought against her by the Spanish King. Among other questionable asseverations, she assures him that she is "nothing of the vile disposition of such as, while their neighbours' house is, or likely to be afire, will not only not help, but not afford them water to quench the same"; and she concludes, not with the hope but, with the conviction that she has made patent her sincerity, "though not fraught with much wisdom yet stuffed with great good will." In one respect indeed all will go along with her: she apologizes for her "skrating hand", and a scratching hand it surely is, as crooked as her policy so often was.

Here, too, may be read the letter, written from Ringwood on July 9th, 1685, the day after his capture, in which the unhappy Monmouth implored the intercession of the Queen Dowager for her husband's and his father's sake. "I would not," writes

the poor craven wretch, "desire your Majesty to do it, if I were not from the bottom of my heart convinced how I have been deceived into it, and how angry God Almighty is with me for it, but I hope, Madam, your intercession will give me life to repent of it, and to show the King how really and truly I will serve him hereafter." And here, too, is the letter of another of that ill-starred House, the son of the King who brought Monmouth to the block and who, unlike Henry of France, thought a mass worth more than a crown,—that James Stuart, whom men call the Old Pretender or the Old Chevalier, as their humour prompts them. Dated from Saint Germain, signed James R., and stamped with the royal signet, it may be said to wear, like the phantom of Death, the likeness of a kingly crown. It assumes too the kingly prerogative in promising Simon Fraser, the notorious Lord Lovat, the dignity of an earldom, in consideration of his ancestor's services and his own, "so as that you shall become an argument to encourage others to serve me zealously," a somewhat unfortunate phrase as things were to go. And here too is perhaps the best known and most famous of all royal compositions, the paragraph inserted by his own hand in the first speech from the throne prepared for George the Third: "Born and educated in this country, I glory in the name of Briton, and the peculiar happiness of my life will ever consist in promoting the welfare of a people whose loyalty and warm affection to me I consider as the greatest and most permanent security of my Throne."

Among these letters is one from a man of whom George the Third was to hear rather more than he cared about. It was written by George Washington to Lord Buchan (a noted Mæcenas of that day) on April

22nd, 1793, and perhaps, when he professed to be his lordship's most obedient and humble servant, the writer went as near an evasion of the truth as was possible for the man who never told a lie. But what gives the letter a particular interest at the present moment is unfortunately not included in the facsimile. This is the writer's expression of the principle which should guide the policy of the United States: "I believe it is the sincere wish of United America to have nothing to do with the political intrigues or the squabbles of European nations; but on the contrary, to exchange commodities and live in peace with all the inhabitants of the earth; and this I am persuaded they will do, if rightfully it can be done." In Nuttall's Dictionary the Monroe Doctrine is defined as, "the theory that the Americans should mind their own business and allow nobody to interfere with them." This obviously is the definition that Washington would have placed upon it; but he would seem to have been too sanguine.

With literary autographs the Department is of course abundantly supplied. The selection for this series ranges from John Dryden to Robert Browning, the latest in point of time being the letter Charles Dickens wrote from Gad's Hill on the day before his death, making an appointment with his friend Charles Kent to meet him on the morrow; and these, with the exception of a page of the unfinished *EDWIN DROOD*, written but an hour or two before the fatal attack, were the last words traced by that busy pen. A most interesting and characteristic selection it is; characteristic of the writer, as letters not always are, and sometimes of their time. Take the first on the list, for example; the piteous appeal of Dryden to Rochester, then First

Lord of the Treasury. Half a century or so earlier Ben Jonson had penned a humble petition to Charles's father, "best of Monarchs, Masters, Men," for an increase of pay. King James had settled on his laureate an annual pension of one hundred marks.

—————This so accepted sum,  
Or dispensed in books or bread,  
(For with both the Muse was fed)  
Hath drawn on me from the times  
All the envy of the rhymes,  
And the rattling pit-pat noise  
Of the less poetic boys,  
When their pot-guns aim to hit  
With their pellets of small wit,  
Parts of me they judged decayed ;  
But we last out still unlayed.

King Charles was prayed to increase his father's marks to pounds, which would not only make the laureate more comfortable and his muse more eloquent, but would bring the less poetic boys to utter confusion. The petition succeeded, and Ben was, we doubt not, made more comfortable ; whether the pit-pat noise was silenced thereby, is another question. But poor Dryden's case was too serious for such jesting doggerel. What a story it tells of the poet's life and of that careless court !

I know not whether my Lord Sunderland has interceded with your Lordship for half a year of my salary. But I have two other advocates ; very extreme wants, even almost to arresting, and my ill health, which cannot be repaired without immediate retiring into the country. A quarter's allowance is but the Jesuit's powder to my disease ; the fit will return a fortnight hence. If I durst, I would plead a little merit, and some hazards of my life from the common enemies, my refusing advantages offered by them, and neglecting my beneficial studies for the King's service. But I only think I merit not to starve. I never applied myself to any interest contrary to your Lordship's ; and on some occasions, perhaps not known to you, have not been unserviceable to the memory and reputation of my Lord your father. After this, my Lord, my conscience assures me I may write boldly, though I cannot

speak to you. I have three sons growing to man's estate. I bred them all up to learning beyond my fortune ; but they are too hopeful to be neglected, though I want. Be pleased to look on me with an eye of compassion ; some small employment would render my condition easy. The King is not unsatisfied of me, the Duke has often promised me his assistance ; and your Lordship is the conduit through which their favours pass. Either in the Customs or the Appeals of the Excise, or some other way, means cannot be wanting, if you please to have the will. 'Tis enough for one age to have neglected Mr. Cowley and starved Mr. Butler ; but neither of them had the happiness to live till your Lordship's ministry. In the meantime be pleased to give me a gracious and speedy answer to my present request of half a year's pension for my necessities. I am going to write somewhat by his Majesty's command, and cannot stir into the country for my health and studies till I secure my family from want. You have many petitions of this nature, and cannot satisfy all ; but I hope from your goodness to be made an exception to your general rules.

It is melancholy to know that the author of *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL* and *THE MEDAL* should have been forced to beg not only for charity, but even for justice from a court to which he had just rendered such signal services. The petition was in part successful, but only in part. What was due was paid ; but there the gratitude of the Sovereign began and ended.

In Wordsworth's letter to Hartley Coleridge on his father's death we find the germ of the beautiful stanza written in the following year :

Like clouds that rake the mountain-summits,  
Or waves that own no curbing hand,  
How fast has brother followed brother  
From sunshine to the sunless land.

"The last year has thinned off so many of my friends, young and old," he writes, "and brought with it so much anxiety public and private, that it would be no kindness to you were I to yield to the solemn and sad



thoughts and remembrances which press upon me.”

That a poet should ever at any time or to anybody express the opinion that he gets his deserts is indeed a surprising thing ; and our surprise is not lessened to find this wonderful admission made by Robert Browning, who certainly never suffered from excessive popularity. “I can have little doubt,” runs the letter, “but that my writing has been, in the main, too hard for many I should have been pleased to communicate with : but I never designedly tried to puzzle people, as some of my critics have supposed. On the other hand I never pretended to offer such literature as should be a substitute for a cigar, or game at dominoes to an idle man. So, perhaps, on the whole I get my deserts and something over,—not a crowd but a few I value more.” These are good words, and we may doubtless take them without Falstaff’s comment. It has always seemed to us that Browning got his deserts, in spite of his Society which was enough to damn all Parnassus, and we are glad to find our opinion justified by so competent an authority.

And lastly we come to Carlyle, writing to Macvey Napier to propose an article on Ebenezer Elliot’s *CORN-LAW RHYMES* for the *EDINBURGH REVIEW*, and characteristically convinced that the whole bookselling trade was going post-haste to the devil because he could not find a publisher for *SARTOR RESARTUS*.

Letters, said Bacon, “are the best materials for history, and to a diligent reader the best histories in themselves.” This may be true enough of such letters as Bacon had in his mind,—letters, for example, such as the British Museum can give us—and of such readers ; but when he penned those words he was all unconsciously

laying an awful curse on posterity. Between him and Boswell must rest the responsibility for all that vast rubbish heap of biography under which our age lies groaning in impotent wrath. Boswell, indeed, as he owns, borrowed his plan from Mason ; but for one who has read the *Life of Gray* thousands are familiar with the *Life of Johnson*. Boswell, moreover, so enlarged Mason’s design as to make it practically his own ; if he did not accomplish his boast of Johnsonizing the land, he may claim at least to have Boswellized biography. “I cannot conceive a more perfect mode of writing any man’s life,” he said, “than not only relating all the most important events of it in their order, but interweaving what he privately wrote, and said, and thought.” To let him tell his own story, we call it now, to let him speak for himself. When the man has a story to tell and knows how to tell it, it may be no bad plan ; but it is above all things necessary that the man who lets him speak should know when to stop him. Johnson’s conversation was indeed well worth reporting, and Boswell was the best of all reporters ; but Johnson, when he put his mind to it, could write as dull a letter as any man, and on this score Boswell seems to have been as little able to discriminate as the dullest of his successors. Even Lockhart, the only biographer allowed to stand second to Boswell by all who do not place him first, would not, perhaps, have spoiled his great work by allowing Sir Walter to speak a little less copiously for himself. That great man wrote very many letters and many very long ones ; his correspondents have not in all cases kept their interest for posterity, and the posthumous charm of a letter will sometimes depend not a little on the person to whom it was addressed. Indeed Moore and Sir

George Trevelyan seem to us the only biographers of the front rank who have succeeded in keeping quite clear of these epistolary pitfalls. To be sure, they had not the temptations of other men; for among all the literary offences laid to the charge of Byron and Macaulay, no one has yet, we believe, accused them of writing dull letters. But it is when we turn from these men to the rank and file that we clearly realise all the awful possibilities inherent in Boswell's plan. What should be one of the most agreeable and instructive forms of literature has become an astonishment and a hissing. Biography is in fact now little more than a letter-book. The printer, it has been truly said, is now the real biographer; a huge, unsorted, undigested mass of letters, journals, common-place books, all "the idle story of an empty day," are sent to the printer, and he prints them. Then comes the preface, which we could all read off blindfold: "I have thought it best to let my friend Jones speak for himself wherever possible." And Jones speaks, speaks through many hundred pages, babbles on from the cradle to the grave, till you feel that if he has done nothing else upon this mortal earth, he must at least have materially increased the revenue of Her Majesty's Post Office.

"I have neither space nor wish," Mr. Ruskin has written in his autobiography, "to extend my proposed account of things that have been by records of correspondence; it is too much the habit of modern biographers to confuse epistolary talk with vital fact." This is a better saying for the present generation to remember than Bacon's. For our part we have always doubted whether even the best of letters really serve the purpose claimed for them. Some of the most entertaining things in our literature are to be found in letters: they interest us

on so many sides, literary, social, political; they may charm us by their style or sometimes move us by their wit, their wisdom, or their wickedness; sometimes they really help to illustrate or explain history; always there breathes through them the pathos or the piquancy of the past. But it is not on such letters that the present question turns. They were written, with rare exceptions, before the era of the penny post and the telegraph, when newspapers were few and men were not in the habit of meeting every day. They have passed the ordeal of Time, the one critic against whose verdict there is no appeal, and taken their place among the classics of our literature. The question rather is whether this epistolary talk, this daily, almost hourly chatter between friends, has really the autobiographical value claimed for it. That it should for the most part be very dull is of course not surprising. All men write letters, and the large majority of men are very dull. The literary faculty is itself rare, much rarer than the superficial observer might suppose from the vast number of writers who assume themselves, and whose publishers apparently assume them, to have it. Nor is the art, or knack, of letter-writing by any means an inevitable complement of the literary faculty; on the contrary it is a gift possessed by some who can lay no claim to the intellectual endowments of many to whom it has been denied. When to these reasons are added the conditions under which most letters are now written, the hurry to catch a post, the press of other occupations, the general strain of modern life, it would be surprising indeed if their literary value were any great thing. But putting this for the moment aside, there remains the question of their autobiographical value. They permit the writer, it is alleged,

to tell his own story, to reveal himself as he really was, with a directness and sincerity that no biographer, however intimate and however candid, can accomplish. The first claim does not necessarily include the second, unless we are to assume that every man invariably puts the whole truth and nothing but the truth about himself into his familiar correspondence; and if such letters ever yet were written, we most strongly suspect that they have never yet been published nor are ever likely to be. Certain habits of the writer, certain qualities of his character and temperament, natural or acquired, they may, unconsciously or otherwise, exhibit; but the man himself, the heart and soul of him, it must surely be obvious that they will not be permitted to reveal, save in such partial glimpses as he may himself select for exhibition. Language, it is said, was given us to conceal our thoughts. A man may prate heedlessly with his tongue, and many do; but he must be a more than common fool, such a fool as even Carlyle would not have anticipated, if he cannot keep the mastery of his pen.

But this, it may be urged, is the proper business of biography; no man should be stripped for public inspection against his will. Precisely so; discretion should be one of the first qualities of a biographer, and is too often the first he discards. But to argue that, by permitting the subject to tell his own story in his own words, the indiscretionary powers of his biographer are held in check, is merely to argue that the biographer is not competent for his work,—which, indeed, in too many instances needs no argument. Nor in fact does the precaution inevitably avail. The faculty of selection is an element, and a most important element, in the quality of discretion; we have only to glance at the masses of biography

which our presses turn out day after day to see how small a part that element has played in their composition. Only the other day, for instance, in turning over the recent volume of Rossetti's correspondence, we lighted upon the following: "Dear Mamma,—I think we said the 24th for your next sitting, but suppose we say instead Tuesday of next week." A few more pages revealed this precious morsel: "Dear W.,—Could you dine here Sunday? One or two fellows are coming, and I would esteem it a boon if you would come. I hope you are better. I got the MSS. to-day." With what conceivable object that ever influenced the human mind can such things have been published? But indeed everywhere in this melancholy book is it manifest that the faculty of selection is not the only element of discretion ignored by the biographer. As for the effect on the narrative of these indiscriminate interruptions, little needs to be said. Frequent and abrupt changes of style must always mar the reader's enjoyment and offend his taste, as surely as the pell-mell of styles in modern architecture offends the eye. Even when the change is from worse to better, the general result is not less ungainly. He never walks gracefully, wrote Landor, who leans upon the shoulder of another, however gracefully that other may walk.

It is certain that, as has been said elsewhere, nine tenths of the letters which make up nine tenths of our current biographies tell no story, beyond the very bald one that they need not have been written and should not have been kept. But then nine tenths of our current biographies, and nine tenths, we are inclined to add, of the remaining tenth, can show no reason at all for their existence. Their subjects have been naturally barren of interest, and their writers have been unable

to give them any. But there have lately been published two collections of letters written by men to whom the world has always been willing to listen, and in whom, apart from their writings, it may reasonably be supposed to be still interested. One of these collections has been frankly made to serve the purpose of a biography; what purpose the other is expected to serve is not so clear.<sup>1</sup>

For the publication of Stevenson's letters from Samoa, Mr. Colvin can show some warrant. Stevenson seems at one time to have been troubled with the fancy that he was losing his popularity, that his day was gone, and that, if not for him at least for his family after him, the outlook was ominous. Mr. Colvin seems to have been fortunately able to dispel these gloomy illusions; but it was under their influence that the idea of publishing these letters seems first to have taken shape. They might make "good pickings" after his death, Stevenson thought, "a piece of provision" for his family. But his friend was warned, warned apparently more than once, and certainly once in most emphatic language, that the letters were not to be published as they stood; "some kind of a book" might be made out of them, he thought, without much trouble; but some trouble would be necessary. "Can I find no form of words," he asks in comical despair, "which will at last convey to your intelligence the fact that these letters were never meant, and are not now meant, to be other than a quarry of materials from which the book may be drawn?" Apparently he could not. Some sort of supervision the editor claims to have exercised, and to have

found it very troublesome and delicate work; but from what has been left one is puzzled to conjecture what can have been taken; for in truth the bulk of these three hundred and fifty pages does most disastrously bear out the author's humorous exposition of the art of letter-writing: "You sit down every day and pour out an equable stream of twaddle." And what makes the editor's attitude more curious still, is that he seems to have been as conscious as we are that the letters would be found tiresome, and to have said so with equal frankness. Over and over again he seems to have warned his friend that he would never succeed in interesting the public at home in Samoan politics, in the scuffle of white kites and black crows that went by that name, and that he was only damaging his own reputation by the attempt. And yet in the face of all this he prints pages after pages of the dreariest stuff conceivable, local squabbles, fireside concerns, trivial details which one wonders that Stevenson could ever have thought it worth while to write even to his most intimate friend. Once Mr. Colvin's remonstrances met with a strange answer: "The letters, it appears, are tedious; they would be more tedious still if I wasted my time upon such infantile and sucking-bottle details." What, one wonders after reading this book, what in the name of the English language can those details have been!

There is, however, one passage in this volume which it would have been a thousand pities to miss. So much nonsense has been written about Stevenson's work, he was made the victim while he lived of such an extravagant system of puffing, that those who did not know him, were almost inevitably forced to associate him with his flatterers, and to believe that he must see himself with their eyes. It is clear that he did not. His most

<sup>1</sup> 1. LETTERS OF MATTHEW ARNOLD, 1848-1888; collected and arranged by George W. E. Russell. Two volumes; London, 1895.

2. VAILIMA LETTERS; *being Correspondence addressed by Robert Louis Stevenson to Sidney Colvin*, 1890-1894. London, 1895.

exacting critic can hardly have judged him more sternly than he judged himself.

For the nonce my skill deserts me, such as it is, or was. It was a very little dose of inspiration, and a pretty little trick of style, long lost, improved by the most heroic industry. So far I have managed to please the journalists. But I am a fictitious article and have long known it. I am read by journalists, by my fellow-novelists, and by boys; with these, *incipit et explicit* my vogue. Good thing anyway! for it seems to have sold the Edition. . . . I do not think it is possible to have fewer illusions than I. I sometimes wish I had more. They are amusing. But I cannot take myself seriously as an artist; the limitations are so obvious.

It is not often one finds a popular author writing in such a strain; an author, too, whom there seemed a general conspiracy among the reviewers to spoil. What a contrast it is to the following extract from the touching epilogue added to these letters by his editor and friend.

The fragment on which he wrought during the last month of his life gives to my mind (as it did to his own) for the first time the full measure of his powers; and if in the literature of romance there is to be found work more masterly, of more piercing human insight or more concentrated imaginative vision and beauty, I do not know it.

How far the public will endorse this eulogy it has not yet had the opportunity of judging; nor is it ever disposed to examine too curiously the attitude of friendship over a new-made grave. But it is hard to imagine Stevenson, however much he may have preferred the new work to its predecessors, sanctioning quite so extreme a rapture.

Of the purpose with which Matthew Arnold's letters have been published, there is, we say, no doubt. It was his particular desire that no biography of him should be written; but it did not seem to his family that

this injunction precluded a selection from his correspondence, and it is at their request, and with their assistance that this selection has been made. It seems therefore something almost of an impertinence to hazard the doubt whether Arnold himself would have sanctioned the publication quite so readily as has been assumed. One remembers certain strictures of his own on the indiscriminate writing of letters; and though the great bulk of these were written to give pleasure to members of his own family from whom he happened at the time to be separated, and are not therefore fairly open to his own criticism, it must be confessed that, when read by eyes for which they were so obviously never written, they do not seem very important. Essentially familiar and domestic, the editor calls these letters in a graceful and friendly little preface; and indeed they are so to an extent that is sometimes almost embarrassing. "They were evidently written," we are told, "without a thought that they would be read beyond the circle of his family." The fact is so evident that it needs all the assurance of print to escape the uneasy sense of doing something discreditable in reading this correspondence at all, as though one had broken open a friend's desk, and was making free with his most private papers. But such scruples will seem in any case the veriest affectation to an age which adds to an almost bloodthirsty curiosity about its neighbour's affairs a most pestering frankness about its own; and in this particular case they are of course on the face of them absurdly superfluous.

These letters are expected to reveal aspects of Arnold's character which could be only imperfectly apprehended through the more formal medium of his published works. For



those who knew him, we are assured, their peculiar charm lies in their perfect naturalness. "They are in a word, *himself*; and there can be no higher praise." And the Editor goes on to draw, in words which recall in some ways Arnold's portrait of his friend Clough, a charming picture of the man whom he was privileged to know so well; of his perfect amiability and sympathy, his sunny temper and inexhaustible fun; his love of children and animals; his absolute freedom from bitterness, rancour, and envy; his unstinted admiration of beauty and cleverness; his frank enjoyment of things which, in his own phrase, tended to promote the agreeableness of life; his childlike pleasure in his own performances. A charming picture it is, and an admirable likeness we are persuaded. Our only quarrel is that it is not to be found in the letters. Indeed we are not at all sure that by those who know his books well it might not more readily be found in them. The inexhaustible fun does in truth somewhat surprise us. That Arnold had a pretty wit everybody who has read him knows, and a vein of humour peculiarly his own, and peculiarly delightful to all who were not made the subject of it. But the fun was not, we fancy, so universally recognised, and assuredly will not be recognised in these letters. One passage indeed there is in which it may possibly lurk, a passage written in the autumn of 1854, when all England was ringing with the news of that wild ride of heroes down the valley of Balaclava: "As for the light cavalry loss, those gentlemen, I imagine, will be more missed at reviews than in the field." To every man, even the wisest, there will come at times a moment of foolishness; but surely this most unfortunate sentence has not been preserved as a sample of the writer's naturalness. We will never believe

that the real Arnold, the kindly, the generous, the sympathetic, was speaking there.

In short, if these letters are really and truly the man himself, then the man himself must have been far other than the world in general has conceived him. Arnold was called many hard names in his time, but never within our knowledge has he been called a dull man; yet it is certain that three fourths of these two volumes might have been written by the dullest man who ever found a biographer. There is an explanation, of course, and when the first shock of surprise is over, it is easy enough to find it. Arnold was a very busy man. There was his official work in the first instance, which Mr. Russell brands as unremunerative drudgery, but which at least brought him reputation, and left him free from the curse under which so many men of letters have laboured, the curse, in Macaulay's terse phrase, of writing to relieve, not the fulness of the mind, but the emptiness of the pocket. He wrote much, both in verse and prose. From first to last Arnold must have published between twenty and thirty volumes, and as we are told that writing did not come easily to him, it is clear that Mr. Morley's description of him as one of the most occupied men of his time is not exaggerated. His correspondence, therefore, was confined almost wholly to his own family, and is naturally filled with such personal matters as they would be most concerned to know; the fireside concerns of his daily existence; his children, his pets, his health, his garden, the places he visited, the dinners he ate, and the people in whose company he ate them. The bulk of these letters were written to his mother, and news of his children naturally plays a large part in them. "They go everywhere with me that I will take them, and

their talk is delightful. We passed a yard the other day where there were cows, and N. said, 'What a nice smell from those dear cows, papa! *Isn't it kind of the dear cows to give us smells?*'" One can imagine with what pleasure the grandmother would read such instances of the little ones' quickness and sympathy; one can imagine with what pleasure the father would write them. But alien eyes, bent possibly upon their own children and their own cows, may be pardoned for reading unmoved such essentially familiar and domestic records. There is a saying: "Never tell your troubles; you only take up the time of the man who is waiting to tell you his." In this hard and busy world the saying perhaps holds good of other things than troubles.

Mr. Morley has lately told us, in reviewing these very letters, that the epistolary charm vanishes in the anticipation of an audience. Walpole's letters and Gray's are banned by him for that reason, being written "as with printer and publisher before them, and the whole literary and fine world looking over their shoulders." Letters, to be enjoyed as letters must be easy, careless, unpremeditated, flung off on the impulse of the moment; improvisations, in short, about yourself and your correspondent, and the personal things which you and your correspondent happen to be interested in and to care about. The public breaks the spell. That is an opinion, and Mr. Morley's opinion on any literary point will always be welcome. And very sound it is, no doubt, so far as the writer and his correspondent are concerned; but when the public is asked to join the party—how then? If the public does not happen to care about the personal things which interest the writer and

his correspondent, what then? Then the public is apt to recollect a certain saying about easy writing and what so often comes of it. If Arnold had had leisure or inclination for a general correspondence on literature, public affairs, and public men, possibly his letters would have been as piquant as Walpole's, as polished as Gray's, as witty as Byron's. But he kept these things for his published writings; for his private correspondence he reserved those intimate confidences, "familiar matter of to-day," which every man is pleased to think important and interesting to those near and dear to him, but which no man of delicacy and dignity would wish to be bawled about the streets. "It is too much the habit of modern biographers to confuse epistolary talk with vital fact." With most of the subjects of modern biographers it must, it would seem, be epistolary talk or nothing; the vital fact is not indeed a conspicuous element in any form of our current literature. But Arnold was the last man to fall into this mistake. To get at the vital fact by all the means in his power was the great aim of his writing; to exhort others to strive for it was the great end of his teaching. "To try and approach truth on one side after another, not to strive or cry, nor to persist in pressing forward, on any one side, with violence and self-will,—it is only thus, it seems to me, that mortals may hope to gain any vision of the mysterious Goddess, whom we shall never see except in outline, but only thus even in outline." It seems hard that such a man should be forced to contribute to the everlasting welter of epistolary talk.

Not here, oh Apollo,  
Are haunts meet for thee.

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

MARCH, 1896.

## THOMAS CATHRO'S CLOCK.

"I AM leaving you alone in the world, Thomas, but I think you will do honestly and well. You have but two things to think of; yourself and your craft. Never demean yourself for an advantage in your craft, and never demean your craft for an advantage to yourself. That way you will succeed with the only success worth having." Such was the dying advice which young Thomas Cathro received from his father. Some days later, on his return from the kirk-yard where he had laid to rest the remains of a parent whom he had both revered and loved, he sat down in the silent house and took account of his position. His years were twenty-one, and he was fairly master of the craft of clock-making. Under the wise guidance of his father, and aided by a naturally serious and well-balanced temperament of his own, he had employed the years of his apprenticeship so well as to have gained repute as a skilful and original workman. He did nothing by rote, but everything with wise consideration. His hand and mind were guided by a sense of fine poetry in adjusting his mechanism to solemnly measure out time; and ere the finished watch passed from his hands it had become a lovable thing from which he parted with regret. There was also a romantic strain in

his outlook on life, although only half acknowledged to himself. Therefore, before settling down in this little town in the midlands of Scotland, he was fain to go out into the world to see and study what the French and Swiss could do, and get some smack of wider existence and experience. The few hundreds of pounds his father had left him would suffice for his modest projects; and he justified them by the conviction that he would thereby extend his knowledge and mastery of the craft he loved. So inspired and resolved he proceeded to London, and, after a stay of about a year there, to Paris. In that city he worked out into practice a subtly-conceived improvement in the mechanism of watches, which he sold for a considerable sum of money to a famous house, remitting the proceeds to the Bank of Scotland in Edinburgh to be held in his name. With the fame of this achievement, and the greater possibilities it betokened, he next passed with high recommendations to Geneva. There he ingratiated himself by his curious admixture of modesty and knowledge. His strongly-marked features spoke of self-reliance; and in his eyes there seemed always lurking a gleam of suppressed wrath, which changed into a grave smile when he was spoken to.

One day, while standing in the

shop of the firm with whom for the time he had some connection, he was shown by the chief a note which had just been handed in. It contained a request for a careful and superior workman to be sent to examine an old clock which had suddenly stopped working. The signature to the note, entirely written in a feminine hand, was *E. Dundas-Leblanc*.

"There is something Scottish in the family; would you like to go?" asked the proprietor.

The house indicated was pleasantly situated on a slope about a mile from the town, and stood in its own grounds, which were attractively laid out in garden and terrace. On being admitted and shown up stairs, and thence by a somewhat long and narrow passage into a room furnished as if for no particular purpose, Thomas Cathro found himself in the presence of a young lady whose age he judged to be about his own. Foreign experience had softened his Scottish stiffness without making him pliant, at least conventionally so. His manners were his own; simple, direct, and not assertive, but still the outcome of a distinct personality.

"I come from Monsieur Hartmann, *mademoiselle*."

"Yes. You are a careful workman?" she asked.

"Certainly; I am a careful workman." There was a slight emphasis laid on the last word, that caused the young lady to look at him with some attention.

"I beg your pardon," she said; "I hope I conveyed no disgrace in calling you a workman."

"None, *mademoiselle*. I am a careful man in my work."

As he turned to look at the clock, the young lady again regarded him with some curiosity. "This is the clock," she said. "It stopped suddenly yesterday. It is very old. It

belonged to my mother who held it in great reverence. She gave it to me at her death, with particular injunctions not to tamper with it; to wind it regularly, and to keep it upright. It was to be moved as little as possible, and if anything went wrong, (although she thought it would go all my life as it had done during hers), I was to be present while it was being repaired. My mother's wishes are sacred," she continued; "and for the clock itself, I have now the same strange respect that she had."

Thomas listened gravely, and with such interested attention, that the young lady was won by his sympathy. She remarked he had a fine, strong face, full of gentle expressions.

He opened the panel-door, and touched the pendulum. "Oh," she cried, "it goes!"

"No," he answered, shaking his head with a grave smile, and looking at her, "that is the click of a dead clock."

"Dead?"

"For the present. Clocks have the advantage over us; they may stop beating-out time, and yet be made to resume. I must take it down. I will be careful." He repeated this without any smile, but rather with sympathetic assurance.

"You are not a Swiss?" she asked, having observed some defects in his French idiom.

"No. I am a Scot."

"Indeed!" she said. "I am half Scottish; my best half," she added, quickly and smilingly, in English.

"Yes," he answered in the same tongue; "wherever the Scottish is mixed it shines forth the best, or" (he chose the word after a pause, during which he continued to peer into the mechanism) "protrudes the worst,—in that case very bad."

"My Scottish part is Dundas."

"A good name; a historical name."

He removed the pendulum, saying :  
"I must take it all down."

"You were trying to avoid doing so?" she asked.

"Yes, if possible, for what you told me."

"Well, never mind. My mother seemed superstitious about it. So am I; but I trust you now."

"Oh, but I will not harm it." He paused in his work of detaching the movement after a little, and added :  
"This is a very old and finely made case. It is a careful work of art."

"Yes; I have heard her say all that. It had been in her family for very long."

"See," he said, pointing, "here is a motto carved beneath the movement on the case, *Gang steady, gang lang*. You know what that means?"

"Yes; but I did not know it was there."

"It was a true artist did that. He put it there out of mortal sight as a charm for the clock itself, as if it were a living thing to be reminded and take thought."

The girl gazed steadily back in his eyes as he watched hers for the effect of his remark. "Why are you a clockmaker?" she said.

"What better trade could I be of? Here is a fellow-workman speaking to me quite earnestly over the space of two hundred years. I can leave good work too for folks that come after."

"What is your name?" she asked simply.

"Thomas Cathro."

"Has your family always been clockmakers?"

"Not that I am aware of. We have no history. My father was a schoolmaster."

"Was?"

"Yes; all dead; I am the only Cathro." He had now detached the mechanism and was examining it.

"Did your mother come from Edinburgh?" he asked.

"Yes; or rather East Lothian. Why?"

"Because here is the Castle-rock engraved on this plate, and a motto, *Haud heigh*, meaning *Aim high*. This is no ordinary clock," he continued, breaking into subdued enthusiasm. "It was a leisurely, thinking man made and put it together. Here is a coat-of-arms carved on the back of the case. Is that the Dundas coat?"

"Yes; my mother's family. She married a French Protestant, and they came here to live. My name is Esmé Dundas-Leblanc. I live here with my sister who is married. She is a Leblanc; I am a Dundas."

He looked at her with a calm scrutiny. "Yes, ye have the wild Scots e'e,—the wild Scots eye, I mean. Ye tell a story quick."

"About my sister?"

"Yes."

"You comprehend quickly."

"I am quick at the Scots uptake."

"Speak like that," she said; "speak like that, while you work. I like it. My mother had times when she spoke so."

"See here," he said, and she came close to look; "there is the fault. Nothing is broken; only that pin has worn so thin that the wheel lies heavy on its centre, and stops the movement. If this clock were life, and that pin were hope, you might see how worn-out hope stops life."

"You are young to moralise."

"But I am not moralising," he said with a laugh. "If clockmaking were mere mechanics I should get weary of it."

"Never mind," she replied; "speak like that. My mother spoke like that."

"Your mother would be having a special liking for you?"



"Yes. I comforted her when she was sad."

"And not so much for your sister?" He did not wait for a reply. "See here again," he continued, "round this wheel: *Quick make, quick break*. This clock is alive; it is full of mind,—that is, for me." He broke ecstatically into the Scottish tongue: "But I'll make ye a fine pin, my auld chap, an' ye sall gang anither hunder year."

"And whose possession will it be in then?" said the girl, moved also by his tone. "I will not have it live after me. Who will care for my mother then?"

"You speak as if your mother's soul was in the clock."

"No, no; not her soul, but something of her."

"A clock-case is a fine abode for a gone spirit, none better. And if you loved your mother, and your mother loved the clock, it is no wonder if you hold tryst there."

"I never thought of it like that; yet it seems true."

"True it is. . . . I must take this wheel with me."

"Oh," she said, "is that necessary?"

"Yes; the pin must be accurately fitted."

"But they are small things. I thought you could bring up a number and fit one here."

"I could do that," he answered, "if you thought the clock would like being treated in that way. I propose to make a special pin for it, by hand. It shall be my own work; something of me shall also go into the clock. It would not be a matter of account or charges at all. I should like to do that."

"I agree," she said, frankly. "Do not be hurt; I did not mistrust you; I was only thinking of my mother's command."

"Oh, but your mother would trust me."

"It is true," she answered. "When will you return?"

"The day after to-morrow at the same hour."

"Very well. Good-day, Mr. Cathro."

"Good-day, Miss Dundas."

She carefully locked the door of the room, then paused at the window in the corridor to watch him pass down the path and along the road. He was pleasant to look at, and she remained by the window in thought long after he was out of sight.

## II.

Two days later, true to his promise Thomas Cathro returned to the house. The young lady received him as before, but with a warmer, kindlier manner. She was dressed with some attractive additions, yet still simply; and there was a deeper colour on her cheek.

"I heard you ask for Miss Leblanc," she said, with a friendly smile of meaning.

"That was only of a servant," he answered.

"My sister," she continued,—*"I told you of my sister—she saw you come up the path; she does not like you,—your appearance; she says you have had no youth."*

"True, true. We jump youth in Scotland, and begin to reflect early. She does not like that, you say? Then I don't like her. But I do not wish *you* to think my heart is not full of young things, Miss Dundas."

She unlocked the door of the room where stood the clock and its works as they had left them. "How dead it looks," she said.

"Only suspended," he answered. "If I know anything of my trade you will find it go at once. Cathro's

pin will now outlast everything in the clock."

"You are sure it will go? I have not slept sound these two nights; I missed its familiar tick-tack."

"Ah, it was not only that; your mother's presence was also in suspense, although time is nothing to her. She inhabits here," he said, touching the clock, "where she can taste of its passing to you."

"Does she see us, do you think?" asked the girl, touched to conviction by the sober mysticism of his remark.

"See? No, not see; but she knows."

"Knows you also?"

"Why not?" he answered, holding out the wheel with its newly-fitted pin. "There's a piece of me going into the ghostly bond now."

She sat down to watch him, observing with what care and reverence he handled the wheels with his long delicate fingers. "See how it fits," he said, as he fixed the new pin in its centre.

"I can scarcely believe it will go."

"You shall see," he answered, turning home the last screws. "Look how the very back of the case, against the wall, is carved with an exquisite pattern, and the top also. There is no part but is decorated with skill and care, although in a place hidden from the eye. What a pang it must have given the man who made it to part with this clock, for money too. But who made it? I see no name or mark anywhere; a common place is that inner circle where the hands turn." He scanned it narrowly. "That brass boss is modern, put there by some ignorant man to keep out dust. Beneath it, no doubt, is the maker's name."

"Would you like to know?" she asked.

"A little," he answered.

"Remove it then, and look."

"Do you say so?"

"Yes, surely, you."

He undid the little rivet, removed the hands and the modern boss, she standing by him pleased to gratify his curiosity, and there on the sunken circle he read: *Thom: Cathro me fecit et machinam et scrinium anno MDCIX*. He stood gazing like one in a dream. It stood too high for her to read, and as she looked at him with inquiring surprise, he pointed mutely with his long forefinger to the name.

She came closer. "Cathro," she cried; "some ancestor?"

"I know not."

"How strange, more than strange. What does the Latin say?"

"Thomas Cathro made me, works and case, in the year 1609."

"And you know nothing of him?"

"Nothing; not by vote of acquired knowledge. But I have a strange conviction of something I feel."

"What do you feel?" she asked.

"That it was I who made that clock three hundred years ago."

He made as if to replace the boss. "No," she said, laying her hand on his arm, "leave it so, I wish it." In silence he refixed the hands, attached the pendulum and the weights.

"How long has it been standing?" he asked.

"Two days."

"How many hours?"

"You can reckon from nine o'clock in the morning two days ago."

"Then it shall not have lost a minute of work for me." Saying this he wound up and exhausted the movement twice, and pulled the weights as much more as he judged would represent the odd hours, steadying the pendulum while he did so. "Now, Miss Dundas, 'tis you shall start it on another long task." Her hand trembled as she approached to touch the pendulum. "Steady," he said,

grasping her wrist with his powerful fingers, and guiding the little effort. The clock resumed its solemn ticking. "It goes as before, Miss Dundas." He held the panel-door in his hand. "I am loth to close it up. See again how beautiful is that shallow carving all over the inside. I dare wager you will find the back of this pilaster, which you cannot see without a light, fully patterned." She lit a taper and held it, while he peered inside. "As I said," he exclaimed, "see!" She bent her head into the opening, quite close to him, as he held the taper. "Take care of your hair with the flame," he said, and gently straightened a loose lock over her forehead. She put up her hand quickly and it touched his. "Do you see?" he asked.

"Yes."

"The man who did all that cared for nothing but truth and eternity."

She stood back suddenly, looking at him with eyes of amazement. "You are no earthly clockmaker," she exclaimed. "You are his spirit come back to repair your former handiwork. Say, is it not so?" She asked this with an effort at a shade of jesting in her voice. He shook his head. "I know no more of myself than what I am now. But saw you nothing else down there in the dark corner. See; touch it. What is it?"

"It seems a leathern loop."

"So. And did I not see a second in the other corner?"

"Yes," she answered fearfully; "what of that?"

"Only this, that I believe this pedestal is boxed, and these loops serve to raise a lid."

"Lift it," she said in a frightened tone.

"Nay; that is for you to do. Shall I go now?"

"No; stay. Do you not see how

I tremble? Raise it, I say. You made it, you or your ancestor."

"But not what may be within. Shall I go?"

"I bade you stay once already," she answered with some fire and some bitterness; "but you may go if that is all you care for me or my wishes."

"Bid me do anything now, Miss Dundas, and I will obey."

"Then raise that lid, if it is a lid."

He handed her the taper, which she held, watching him with intense expectation. Taking hold of the two tags of leather he pulled the lid, which came away with a strange creak. "It speaks like a spirit in pain," he said. By the thin light of the taper they could see another cover of dark wood, in the centre of which was a sunken brass handle. "Raise that," she said, in the same tone of half-command. He did so. It came away noiselessly, and discovered to view a tray divided into compartments of differing shape and size, all lined with silk, now much faded. Only two contained anything. "Here is a ring," he said holding it up, and looking into her face, which was close to his, as she stood peering earnestly into the narrow space. She turned as pale as clay, faltered, and seemed about to swoon. "What is it?" he asked, putting out his arm to support her. With an effort she came to herself, but sank on her knees, and took the ring in her hand. "The night before my mother died," she said, "I heard her moving in the dawn. When I rose and went to her she was coming, deathly pale and faltering, from this room. Next day I missed the ring from the forefinger of her left hand, where she always wore it. She would not answer to my questions as to where it was. I thought she did not understand, as she was very weak and still, and I searched everywhere in vain. This is it."

He took up the second object, which was a little box with a sliding cover, and a notch for the thumb to push it by. He looked at her, and she nodded. When opened it revealed a plait of hair of two colours inter-twisted, one dark brown, hard, and crisp, the other yellow, and of silken softness. The plait was fastened at each end with a few turns of silk thread.

She regarded it for some seconds in silence. "Can you explain?" she said at last. "You are wise."

"Is this your mother's hair?" he asked, pointing to the light strand.

"Yes; as it was in youth. I have some in an old brooch. It is the same."

"And the other is your father's?"

"No," she answered faintly, "his was raven black." There was a pause. "Explain," she said, half-fiercely, with a slight taunt in her tone.

"Love," answered Thomas Cathro, "does strange things, they say."

She leaped up angrily. "Will you malign my mother, you cold, ghostly Scotsman?"

"Young love," he answered gently, "bides long." And he stroked the twined locks as they lay in his palm.

She broke into a sob, saying "Mother," and taking the hair from him, restored it, wet with her tears, to its little box. "Put everything back into its place," she said.

"But there is more beneath; another lid that lifts."

"Then raise it," she said as before.

"You make me your agent, ask me questions, and then taunt me with slander," he replied.

"No, no. Never mind that; we are friends. Lift again."

He did so, revealing the rest of the boxed pedestal lined also with silk, where at the bottom lay the tassel of a sword, a military cockade, two silver shoe-buckles, and three bundles of letters.

"Give me these," she said.

He bent to touch them, but arresting his hand, said: "'Tis as easy for you to stoop as for me, and more fit for you to touch."

"Then we are not friends?" she said inquiringly.

"A Scots friendship is a serious thing," he answered.

"Yes; give me these." He lifted the things up one by one, and placed them in her hands. When he laid the letters in them with slow reverence, her fingers trembled violently. At that moment a footfall was heard in the passage, and with calm adroitness Thomas Cathro restored the clock and its mysterious receptacle to its first state, and snatching the things from the girl's hands as she stood frightened and motionless, put them into his pockets. The door opened, and a tall, dark, French-looking woman entered. Thomas, with the lighted taper in his hand, made as if he were still engaged in examining the works of the clock.

"Well," said the tall woman, in French, to her sister, "is the venerable object going again?"

"Yes, Charlotte; it goes as well as ever."

"And your worship of it also as before?"

"As before, sister."

"It is an old clock, is it not?" she asked, addressing the clockmaker.

"Yes, madam; very old."

"The case is curious, but the movement must be antiquated. Why not have a new one?"

"They have worn so far together; it would be a pity to separate them now."

"You also?" she said, laughing, somewhat stridently for a woman. "But it is excused with you; you are a clockmaker."

"Only a clockmaker, madam."

"Well," she said, in the same gibing

tone, "let your bill read : 'To repairing an idol,' and my foolish sister will pay you handsomely."

"'Tis the same price for idols, madam, as for new gods ; the proper time of day is everything."

The woman looked sharply at the clockmaker. Thomas Cathro stood there with his pockets full of alien mystery. The clock was ticking bravely ; there was no excuse for longer stay. He turned to the girl : "Will you then have the case waxed, as I suggested ? It will preserve it."

"Yes, please," she answered at once.

"I will come to-morrow if convenient."

"Very well ; at the same hour."

"At the same hour, *mademoiselle*."

"But that is cabinet-maker's work," said the elder sister.

"I understand perfectly about wood-work, madam." He bowed respectfully, and took his departure.

In the evening, as he sat in his own little room overlooking the lake, a note was brought him by an elderly woman, who, before delivering it, made certain by many questions of his identity. It ran thus : "This is sent you by a faithful old servant. You will please read the letters and tell me their import to-morrow. I hear you ask, must I do this ? I say, yes. Your Friend."

### III.

THOMAS CATHRO'S task kept him awake all the night. The mere reading of the letters did not occupy long, for they were not very numerous ; but the story set forth in them so wrought on his sympathy and imagination, that he re-read it, pondered it, and realised it, till it took possession of him, and would not go from his mind.

One packet was composed of the letters of Archibald Dennistoun, and

covered a period of five years. Beginning with love, young, fervent, full of hope, for Marion Dundas, they ended with the same love, but clouded by personal disaster, ruin of fortune and prospects, and banishment for political intrigue. They showed Archibald Dennistoun as a late and faithful royalist, serving a cause, hopeless and long gone by, by means that brought him within the scope of the laws of treason. Another packet comprised the letters of Marion Dundas to him, speaking of love as true, if more soberly expressed. Thomas Cathro found the series complete, question and reply, suggestion and response, fitting in with perfect clearness. The third packet was composed of little notes, without heading, address, or signature. Only one bore a date, set down in bitterness as recording the anniversary of a happy event twenty-two years previously. By allusions made in them these notes seemed to have been written in Geneva. They breathed of disappointment, querulousness, even despair ; they conjured up old affection, and spoke of broken faith, and a too credulous heart. In the middle of the packet were two miniatures without frames, one of a woman whom the clockmaker divined at the first glance to be Miss Esmé Dundas-Leblanc's mother ; and the other of a gallant-looking youth of open, smiling countenance. He wore a soldier's coat, and the hilt of his sword was painted as if held high in his hand.

The candle was burning faint in the breaking dawn as Thomas Cathro sat reading for the twentieth time, but now, with a wild disappointed desire to solve its mystery, the last of the little notes, which ran thus : "But once more and I leave Geneva and you for ever. Once more, Marion. Forty-five is young to die to joy, for when gone from here I shall be to



all purpose dead. Only once more, Marion." On the back of this was written in a woman's hand: "14th May, 1787. May heaven in its mercy pardon me!"

"What for?" asked Cathro aloud, as he blew out the candle, and standing at the window gazed at the faint signs of day; "What for?" He looked for some minutes motionless at the rising glory of the sun. Then he turned from the window saying, "And why should I, Thomas Cathro, watchmaker, trouble my soul so about an old tale?" Wrapping a blanket around him he lay back resolutely in his chair for a short rest. But dawn is the time of dreams, and in the short hour that ensued he saw curious visions, and a love-history that held his mind with the persistence of reality. He awoke angry with himself. Work was impossible, so he went forth by the lake and the heights till the dinner-hour, sitting down every now and again in thought, and rising impatiently, till he returned in the same strange, uneasy, haunted humour. Dinner over, he set out for the house on the hill, purchasing on the way, with a grim laugh, some polisher's wax and cloths. Almost at the gate of the villa he stood still suddenly, struck by a thought which caused him to take from his pocket the smaller bunch of notes, and detach the one which bore the woman's piteous prayer for mercy in heaven. This he put in his waistcoat-pocket and went on.

The young lady received him upstairs with her former distant courtesy, but once in the clock-room, she held out her hand for him to take, and said merely, "Well?"

Thomas looked about him meaningly.

"No," she said divining his glance, "impossible. This, you observe, is an annexe. No one can come near

save by that passage, and it creaks to the lightest foot."

"Then I will begin to polish the clock," he answered.

"Look at my eyes," she said, setting herself before him. "I have not slept."

"Why? What have you to do with love-tales dead and gone?"

"As much as you have to do with ancient clocks. You speak worshipfully of clocks, imagine them alive, give them souls, come here like a returned spirit, draw secrets from them, probe my mother's heart and mine; and now, will you, like blank fate, keep silence, and hold the dead and living uneasily in your power?"

"You may read as I have done," he said.

"Ay; but not understand like you."

"How old are you?" he asked suddenly.

"Twenty-two."

"What month and year were you born in?"

"In 1788, on the 14th of February."

"St. Valentine's Day?"

"Doubtless; what then?"

"Nothing; nothing at all. Listen. your mother was younger than you now are when she loved and was loved by a youth called Archibald Dennistoun. They wrote beautiful letters to each other, full of pure affection and hope. But the youth was a soldier, a Prince Charlie's man, and followed his king abroad. He got mixed up in political intrigues in the Stuart cause when it was already dead, past all hope of resurrection. For his faith's sake he loved it the more. That is why your mother also came to France. He was seized in England, tried, imprisoned, his estates confiscated, himself ruined. All that is in the letters, and the last from prison is the highest, bonniest scoff at fortune one could wish to read.

Your mother was to wait till time or fortune set him free. When or how he was liberated appears not, but it is clear he found her out in Geneva here twenty—I mean, many years after, and he seems to have haunted her. Honestly I doubt not; never fear it, Miss Dundas. And then it would seem he went away for ever. That is all. And now, will you follow my advice?"

"What is it?"

"True, blind promises were never Scots dealing. Put everything back in its place, and never disturb it again. Do you say yes?"

"Yes."

"Now let me wax the case and go. Shortly I return to Scotland. I have seen all the Swiss can do, and I can do as good as his best at home. But look ye, Esmé Dundas, you are Scots, true Scots; and for a word out of your mouth Thomas Cathro would cast himself unthinking into Geneva lake and be dead."

"Put everything back," she said, "I will obey you."

He opened the panel-door, lifted the secret covers, and producing the packets of letters laid them reverently in their old hiding-place. "But first look at this," he said, drawing forth her mother's miniature; "who is that like?" And he gazed upon the girl with subdued but unabashed delight. Tears came to her eyes as she looked on the picture. "And then this," he continued, handing her the young soldier's portrait. "Look at it well. Birth, gallant thoughts, gentry breeding. Why should worse men be happy?"

"What mean you by 'worse men'?" she asked quickly.

"Pooh," he answered scornfully, "see how we live now, with easy bread from day to day, hunting foxes or making clocks, with never a thing to rouse us or make the blood run;

stamping out political ideas for fear some few should lose their lives in honest strife. What, if I wished to win a lady's love as this gallant did, what, I say, should I turn to, what try, what dare, what achieve? What for did ye require me to mend history-haunted clocks, and what for give me these letters to read? Could you not leave me alone in peace with my trade? I'll make watches with him that breathes; but what stuff would that be to brag of in a maid's ear? I'll think my ain think, an' be sure o't,—pardon me the Scots: I will think my own thoughts, and know them true against any man; but in what cause shall any one send me to whirl a sword? And who will weep my setting out, that will be safe home the same night by set o' sun?"

The girl stood gazing at him, half amazed, half admiring. He replaced the inner lid and the jewel-tray. "What old ballad was that my mother used to make me read to her about True Thomas?" she asked gently.

"Ballad me no ballads," he answered fiercely; "this is not a ballad age, Miss Dundas." Then in a softer tone he continued: "That lid is closed for ever to you. I have told you true. Uncover not a dead love; it will fire your heart. Put back the ring there, and the hair here, and let your mother's spirit rest. Spirits are bad companions for mortals. Your own hands shall put down this last cover. Well done! When you and this clock by any chance are like to part, then open this and burn the contents. Other virtue the clock has none. Cathro was a handicraftsman; he but made the shell to hold a love-tale, and for a spirit to haunt. You may say now the case is waxed. I'll wax no more of it, and none can tell. Shortly, and I am off for Scotland. 'Tis a long journey there, as I shall make it. Say good-bye to me, Thomas

Cathro, clockmaker, and, if you will, wish me well."

He half turned to go, and she looked at him with a confused countenance, saying in a low voice: "Yesterday you spoke plainer; I knew your meaning. Did I tell you I am my own mistress, and have a portion of my own?"

"I am glad to hear it. Give it to no man. Money makes them monkeys. Good-bye."

"But—but you have done me a service."

"I am paid."

"How?"

"Miss Dundas, there is no blood in ye but is pure Scots. Your eye has the light of the loch and the shadow of the mountain in it at once. For the glance of it I would do much more than mend a clock."

"You have been a friend to me."

"Trow me still, but let me go."

"You must take something from me; something of my own; something I shall miss."

"I could choose something you alone can give and would not miss."

"Then do."

"You give it me? I dare not name it."

"Yes; if I may."

He put his hand on her shoulder and turned to the window, she also obeying the movement. It seemed to her that her spirit at that moment was entirely bent to willing obedience. The hand that lay on her shoulder held her as in a charm. With the disengaged arm he made a wide sweep to direct her eyes, and in a deep stirred voice said: "You see the lake, and the mountains, and the blue sky, and all that is vast, moving, and wonderful, well then"—and he suddenly folded her in his arms and kissed her on the lips twice, then turned and went away ere she could speak.

Next day Thomas Cathro left

Geneva by the diligence in the early morning and disappeared into the turmoil of war that vexed Europe. Where he went, how existed, or what were his adventures, no one ever knew, for there was none to care, save that young girl's heart he left behind so little comprehended.

After two years spent in finding out and corresponding with relatives in Scotland, Esmé Leblanc proceeded to Edinburgh with only her old maid-servant for companion. There she took up her abode for a time, and ever in secret seemed to burn on her lips the imprint of two entrancing kisses, and a world of passion in her heart, while she prosecuted inquiries with unwearying ingenuity about one Thomas Cathro, watch and clock-maker. She feigned reasons to the Edinburgh shopkeepers, and even described him. One old merchant told her that Cathro was a famous maker of clocks in days long gone, and that as recently as fifty years one of the name still followed the pursuit somewhere in Fife. That was all she ever learned; and she returned sadly to Geneva lest perhaps he might go back there to see her, for somehow she was persuaded that he, no more than she, would ever forget. She was sure that never since the world began, or love had a name, had there been two such kisses as those that Thomas Cathro took and left.

#### IV.

It was three years later, about a month after Waterloo, that Thomas Cathro walked into Edinburgh High Street, erect, bronzed, travel-worn, with a deep scar on his temple; and entering the Bank of Scotland inquired if the five hundred pounds he had sent three years previously were still on deposit in his name. Finding

the money secure and his title clear, he retired to his native town, where he took a little house in the central street and set up a business as clockmaker. In the years that ensued he found he was in no wise dependent upon the wants of the place for occupation. Work came to him from all quarters, particularly from the great shops of the larger towns. He executed whatever was committed to him with such thoroughness and skill that he soon established for himself a wide fame in his handicraft, and other men became rich on the improvements which he introduced quietly and without proprietary claim. For no recompense and at no man's demand would he consent to hurry, but parcelled out his day with method and deliberation. A portion of it he devoted to works of his own conception, principally long case-clocks, and timepieces for niches. These he designed and finished entirely with his own brain and hands, case and mechanism being constructed and fitted with genial patience and wise elaboration. He sold them always as if with regret, by preference to some private person, and only reluctantly to the representatives of business houses in Edinburgh or Glasgow. A chief pleasure to him was a commission from some laird or country gentleman, who desired a clock for a particular position in his house. On such occasions Thomas Cathro would go to view the room or hall, and in due time produce a piece of work whose carving, shape, and adornments harmonised to the best of his skill with the position it was destined to occupy. If the result did not seem to himself satisfactory he was the first to say so; but if it met with his own approval and did not please the purchaser, then would Thomas remove the clock and pay no further heed to his client.

With the passing years he continued

to inhabit, without change other than what subtle time works, his little two-storied house, which was kept clean and orderly by the daily visitation of an elderly woman, whom he called 'Lizbeth. She made his mid-day and evening meals; his breakfast of oatmeal porridge he cooked himself. Into his work-room up stairs she was not permitted to go. A trap-door in the flooring enabled him to lower to the ground-level the long clocks when finished. The roof was crowned with a little turret fashioned by himself, in which he had set up a four-dialled clock that gave the time of day to the townfolk, and by it they set their watches and governed their doings as confidently as by the sun itself. It had a clear silver-toned quarter-chime, and a resonant tenor bell for the hours. When the town lay quiet in the dead of night the fine harmony of its proclamation charmed with mystery the ear of many a half-sleeping child, or woke the dormant sentiments of ripe age, as only sweet bells can.

And so the years ran on. Old 'Lizbeth had died giving place to her daughter who bore the same name, and rendered Thomas Cathro the same services. Age was upon him; seventy years would soon complete their tale, yet still he was the same grave, self-centred man. The eyes were yet luminous and soft when in repose; but when he spoke the deep fire broke from them, and all his features bent to the sense of what he said, which was ever to the purpose, somewhat laconic, but touched every now and again by some ardent out-of-the-way word, which he would launch with a decisive gesture. At such times one remarked particularly the deep scar over the left temple, which the clockmaker had brought back from his travels. The educated delighted in his company when they

could tempt him abroad, for he had moments of conversation in which his words made the veritable image and presentment of the thing he spoke of. Such were those in which he would describe the assault on Badajoz, the struggle at Quatre Bras, the fierce Sunday at Waterloo ; also, what colours the Alpine peaks take in the morning sun, and the sheen and shadow of Geneva Lake in the moonlight.

To the poor he was a steadfast, uninquiring friend. Tinkers, ne'er-do-weels, girls in trouble over neglected matrimony, all knew him for a midnight benefactor. Indeed, over all womankind he exercised a strange fascination. One sweet girl, heiress to an ancient name, who stopped her carriage at his door one day to leave him her watch for repairs, and stayed to talk, asked him to tell her how he came by the scar on his temple. Leading her gently to the window, he said, "Stand in the light," and after gazing steadfastly in her face, continued : "I will tell ye, for ye have eyes like one I knew long ago. And it was for such another (though I knew her not) that I got the mark, in saving her from a ruffian soldier in Badajoz. And so, for your e'en's sake and your own, I will put a braw new movement in your ladyship's watch." His face changed from fire to sadness, as he added with soft supplication : "You would do an old man a favour never to pass his door," gazing still in the young face.

So passed into age Thomas Cathro, till one day the carrier's van stopped at his door, bringing for him a long box marked *Clock, with great care*, and a letter which had evidently been recommended with special precautions, for the carrier brought forth a form of receipt to which he required the signature of Thomas Cathro, whose name it bore. Judging it to be

merely a commission from Edinburgh, the old clockmaker laid it aside and went on with the task he had then in hand. When evening came, and his frugal supper was over, he lit the candle and broke the seal. Before he had read a word of the contents, a strange unexplained memory came over him of the letters he had read by candlelight in Geneva so many years gone past. Why at that moment his recollection should revert to that episode, which had dangled in his heart all these years like a broken, unknit strand, he knew not, but he read without surprise, as if they were an expected message, these words : "I have discovered you at last, Thomas Cathro. Forty-five years ago I came to Edinburgh and sought you in vain, and you never knew. As time with me was fast running out, I tried once more, and with joy I hear of you. The unwitting messenger was young Lady Balmeath. She repeated something you said about her eyes and those of one you knew long ago. They were mine you meant, Thomas, were they not ? I too have been faithful. See how I obey you ; I send you the clock. Deal with it as you only know how, so that we may meet again where time, as you said, is not measured. I return to Switzerland for all that remains of my life. You have been to me a spirit so long that I will not know you now save so. Therefore I do not say 'good-bye,' but rather 'hasten.' Esmé Dundas." To this there was added : "I stopped the clock at nine on the morning of Friday. When it came from Switzerland I carefully made up the time it lost as you showed me how."

There was a soft youthful light in the clockmaker's eyes as he unscrewed the box. Reverently he uplifted the clock and set it against the wall in a vacant space. All was still



in the little room as he opened the panel door, but the silence spoke to him so that the tears ran from his eyes. "Esmé," he called softly into the hollow space, "Esmé," and the sound, striking on some vibratory part of the mechanism, returned a soft musical tone for answer. He carefully folded her letter, and lifting the secret cover laid it there beside the ring, replacing the lid. Then, as for four days and the due number of odd hours, he alternately wound up and exhausted the movement, finally setting the hands to the proper time, and touching the pendulum. As the clock resumed its measured beat he raised his hands, and speaking to it as before said: "You will tell me when she is no more. Answer, answer, I say; you will tell me when she goes." Again it seemed to him some soft melodious response came from the mysterious interior, and he closed the door.

Morning and night for more than a year Thomas Cathro laid his intent ear against the clock, listening as if for an expected sign, and making always some low comment as if he spoke to one who heard. In that year he changed greatly. His hair which had preserved much of its colour, grew silver white, his face softened into a shadowed calmness and as he passed along the road to church people remarked that he seemed ever to be gazing on something afar off. His benefactions increased so that the parish minister reproved him for his indiscriminate charity to worthless persons, to which Thomas Cathro's answer, some days later, was to hand him a bank draft for a hundred pounds, to be distributed according to the minister's methods. "Between us," he said, "we may help all sorts. My way, sir, is perhaps too primitive. I have no skill in scientific charity, and am apt to think only that a hungry

sinner craves food, and a frozen reprobate some firing."

Meanwhile the clock had aroused the curiosity of the few privileged to see it. It was a striking object with its case of dark carved oak softened to a deep lustre by time, and dial of mellow-hued brass chased with curious designs. The hands simulating wavy serpents, whose heads were pierced by the centre-pin, seemed to quiver with life as they crept along the circle of the figured hours, surrounded by the graven signs of the zodiac. Its deep brassy tick had a strange echoing persistence about it, the beat of a conscious thing, working not by thoughtless mechanism, but sternly engaged in the solemn task of marking out the passing away of time.

Some envied its possession, some dared to hint at its price. To all his answer was merely silence, accompanied in the case of the latter by a stern flash of the eye.

One day 'Lizbeth said to him: "The young laird o' Easterfield was wishing me to take a guinea to persuade you to sell him that old clock; but I am not caring for that kind o' money, and I said you could speak brawly for yoursel'!"

"And what said he then, 'Lizbeth?"

"He said you wadna speak on the subject."

"He that buys that clock buys me, 'Lizbeth; and you know a man dare not sell his own soul, or the soul of another."

"Losh, Maister Cathro, we speak o' clocks, not souls."

"Both, 'Lizbeth, both. But you will not say that or anything like it to the young laird. Say just the clock is not for sale."

And faithful 'Lizbeth, after gazing meditatively at her old master for some moments, went on with her work.

Spring had come, and 'Lizbeth who

was laying the dinner-cloth said to the clockmaker : " You will be going out more now that the fine weather is coming."

" Ay," he answered, " there's fine weather coming, 'Lizbeth."

She was startled at that moment to see him rise from his chair and approach the clock with a face of intent earnestness. With one hand uplifted to enjoin silence, he listened for some seconds, then opened the panel-door, bending his ear yet closer. He shut it, and without moving said : "'Lizbeth, I am an old man. My time is near. If you find me dead soon, promise to do what ye will find written on a paper I shall leave."

" But, Mr. Cathro, ye must not—"

" Promise, 'Lizbeth. I do not bribe ye, but ye will find your wage go on the same when I am away ; promise."

" Sure enough I promise, Mr. Cathro."

" Very well, remember."

That night Thomas Cathro stood long listening at the clock-door, and at last went to bed. He had been but two hours asleep, when he leaped up suddenly, and passing rapidly through the open door that led to the parlour, stood before the clock. Its beat was steady for some moments, then there was a blank of sound followed by an irregular quicker throb. It resumed for some seconds, only to again fail in its measured click, and tremble faintly. He opened the front, his face transfigured. " Esmé," he called softly, imploringly. The clock

answered by a succession of quick fluttering beats. " Esmé," he called again, " I am here." The clicking ceased, and the pendulum swung soundless to and fro, while Thomas Cathro with fixed gaze watched it abate slowly and finally stop.

He detached it, rapidly unscrewed the entire mechanism, and with deft hands undid its pins and wheels, making a heap of all the parts. Then he opened the secret place in the pedestal. For the first time he discovered that it formed a box which came clear away from the base of the clock. Into this, among the letters and other relics, he packed the entire mechanism, closed the lid, and fastened it down with screws. Taking a piece of paper he wrote on it these words : *I charge you, Elizabeth, by your promise, to see this box placed in my coffin and buried with me, undisturbed, as it now is.* The box he placed on a chair by the bedside, and himself calmly crept between the sheets, placidly stretching his hands out over the counterpane, and closing his eyes. In the morning 'Lizbeth found him lying so, dead. Three days later the chime of the chapel bell in Geneva rang to her last rest, amid the lamentations of many whom she had befriended, Esmé Dundas-Leblanc ; and on the same day, in stern Scottish silence, the earth was heaped over the coffin of Thomas Cathro, at whose feet faithful 'Lizbeth had placed the box, never letting it pass from her eyes until the last.

## THE STAR OF THE SEA.

ABOVE the inner arch of the Grande Porte at St. Malo, there is a wide niche where candles burn and a tall painted figure stands; a quaint archaic figure with a Child sitting primly on her outstretched arm, and her full eyelids drooping in an eternal meditation. On either side there are the huge squat towers and the great retreating wall; beneath, there is a little square, with *cafés* at every corner, and a constant crowd coming and going all day long.

The Virgin is there, because she is the guardian and patroness of St. Malo, the watcher at her door; and because in the little square below she can look down upon her children month after month, season after season, in their home-comings and their out-goings, in the autumn that brings them back, in the spring that sends them forth again. She is the protectress of St. Malo, the guardian of the town, as sacred as she is dear and familiar to every true Malouin. But to those whose calling leads them into the constant peril of the sea, she is infinitely more; she walks before them on the waters, her hand is stretched out to them in danger, to save if it may be; she is for them indeed the Star of the Sea, the Gate of Heaven.

It is autumn, and already the Newfoundland fishing-boats are coming back, one by one. There is a saying here, that it is "The wind of St. François that brings home the Terreneuvas;"<sup>1</sup> and surely on the 4th of October, the fête of St. François d'Assisi, there is a fair strong wind

<sup>1</sup> *Terreneuvas*, the local name for the Newfoundland fishermen, as also for their boats.

blowing from the west. In many of the villages round St. Malo, and inland where one can no longer catch sight of the sea, there will be those who turn their faces westward to-day, to greet the wind that has filled the returning sails; in many of the cottages, the goodwife will look to her cider, and tell herself that it must be ready against the *gars* comes home. Perhaps the *gars* is indeed a boy, as the word signifies: perhaps, also, he is a gray-haired man; but to the goodwife who waits for him at home, he is always the *gars*. And she brings out the great arm-chair from the corner, where it has stood unused all the long summer, and sets it by the fire; it is empty still, but she fills it for the present with hope. Outside, the sun shines broadly golden, and the trees wave in the wind; one hears the thud of falling apples, and the ground beneath is variously yellow, or green, or red with them; in the yard there is a scented shining heap of fruit, and the cider-mill is at work. Everywhere there is the rich strong smell of apples in the air; it is autumn, and the Terreneuvas are coming home.

In the dock the quay is clear, waiting for them; it has been empty, save for a stray visitor or so, all the summer. All this month they come in slowly, but the weather is not yet fair for them; perhaps there are storms against which they can make no way, or windless days when the sea is white and still and swims in silver mists: it is not till after All Saints' that each day the Terreneuvas gather and wait in the bay to come in on the tide. They bring with them an overwhelm-

ing stench of salt : everywhere there is salt, the stones, the decks, the waiting carts, are white with it ; and everywhere, too, there are unending piles of salted fish.

And now the great steamer is due ; the steamer that brings a swarming mass of fishermen back from the Banks, blackening her decks and climbing on to her rigging for the first sight of home. First it is a cluster of black spots on the horizon ; then the land draws back on either side, and St. Malo ahead lifts its single spire like a beckoning finger ; then the lighthouse is past and the bay opens, and the steamer sweeps round the breakwater under the walls of the town over which the tall chimneys rise and peer. St. Malo to-day has emptied itself upon the quay, and there rises thence a roar of welcome ; the Terreneuvas,—save for the laggards and the storm-stayed, and those who are waited for, but do not come—are home.

The goodwife is there from her little inland village ; she has tramped in, in her *sabots* that are pointed high at the toes and bound with brass, with her Sunday *coiffe* that is trimmed with lace. She has put on her flowered kerchief and the apron with the wide silk ends ; she wore them all, perhaps, at her marriage, and she brings them out of the chest where they lie, on the great church festivals and for the return of her *gars*. The cider is ready at home, the room swept, and the great arm-chair set close to the fire, the high two-storied box beds have little curtains draped neatly at their windows ; everything is ready and clean and waiting. And before the little plaster Virgin on the chimney shelf there is a bunch of coloured leaves and late flowers or berries, and two tiny tapers which to-night must be lit ; for the good Virgin, the Star of the Sea, has

watched over the *gars*, and has brought him once more safely home.

And there is perhaps a young wife, with a bundle in her arms ; this time last year she was married, and now there is something for her man to see that he has never seen before. She will put it into his arms presently, and he will look at it with a half alarmed delight, and then he will call his mates to come and see, and tell them that it is a boy, *parbleu !* And he will call it Mousse and talk of taking it with him to the Banks, presently, in a year or two. There are fathers and mothers, friends, sweethearts, children, all waiting eagerly, all there to meet the men that have come home in the great steamer ; and there are some, also, who wear their *coiffes* hanging loose, and covered with a square of black cloth, some, with their eyes dim, who are there to meet those who have not come home. “ He would have been in the steamer too if—” they say brokenly ; and the people about them nod and understand. There are so many, always so many, who do not return.

And now the roads leading into the country are loud with the passage of carts, of all sorts and sizes ; donkey-carts, huge farm waggons, coaches, omnibuses ; they are piled up with great black boxes and baskets of cod ; it is a procession without end. And there is all day long a tramping of innumerable feet ; they are going home, laughing and singing, to wake up the villages that have slept all the summer through ; their *gars* are safe, and it has been a good fishing, and there is even a little money to put in one’s pocket over and above the advance that was made to them before they left in spring. For sometimes there is none, and if there has not been good luck at home, it is hard when the men come back to be fed

and kept all the winter in idleness; though it is not to-day, when they have just landed, that one would think of it.

There is a pilgrimage, in these early days of November, to St. Jouan des Guérets. It starts from the great church of St. Servan, where the men gather about the door; they have come in from St. Malo, from Dinard, from all the nearer inland villages, where the *gars* have come back safe from the terrible Banks. There are some of them that are gray-haired and weather-worn, and must soon learn to sit at home; there are young men, there are even boys, who have not yet had time to forget how Brittany smiles in summer; and there are women, who will have their share in thanksgiving to the Good Lady who has heard their prayers. And here, as on the quay when the steamer comes in, there are also those that come to weep, and who see in all the crowd of men only the one that is not there.

Presently with a shuffle and a clatter, the procession starts upon its way. A young priest from the church and an acolyte bearing the crucifix are leading, and the men follow in an interminable line, their eyes vague with the long-sightedness of the sea, their caps in their hands, and their feet bare, tramping rhythmically; last of all the women carrying the *sabots* of their men, the great *sabots* that they wear on board the schooners, that they wear even aloft, the great heavy *sabots* of the *Terreneuvas*. "Hail, Mary, full of grace!" says the young priest in a rapid, business-like monotone, glancing behind him to see that the crowd is following decently and in order; and along the road rolls the response: "Pray for us, now, and at the hour of death." The sun is shining with the peculiar brilliance of this still autumn weather, the road

is wide and white and dusty. The men's voices, hoarse from the fogs and the winds, rise and fall in the ever recurring responses; there is a constant tinkle as the chaplets pass through every hand, and the soft rhythmical thud of bare tramping feet.

Half-way, just where the road to St. Jouan des Guérets turns off and climbs the hills that edge the river, there is a tiny ivy-covered chapel, which thrusts a quaint gable upon the road. Upon its steps the acolyte rests the crucifix, and the young priest takes his place beside it; the men kneel down, bare-headed and bare-footed, and a little further off the women in a white-capped cluster upon the road. Then the hymn rises, the hymn which is peculiarly their own, the hymn of the *Terreneuvas*; the one which they sing in joy and in trouble, in life and in death: *Ave! Maris Stella, Dei Mater Alma!* And on the steps of the little chapel the young priest sings lustily as one whose business it is, and the acolyte steadies the crucifix that glitters in the sun.

Then the line forms again, and the procession winds its way along the river bank, climbing the hill on which St. Jouan des Guérets is set amid trees; and presently they come in sight of the little church, to which they are making pilgrimage. And all down the line runs a thrill of relief and satisfaction; the feet that ache step out more briskly, the vague eyes brighten, and there is a movement and a stir, as the chaplet finishes and the litany begins, with its cheerful air and its thundering response, that peals magnificently across the fields. *Sancta Maria!* chants the young priest; and loudly, almost triumphantly, rings out the answer, *Ora pro nobis!* Then the crowd passes, singing still, into the church, where a quaintly-



painted Virgin stands upon her altar looking down, with a slight wise smile as of one who remembers all things; about her hang strange offerings, ancient pictures and banners and variously rigged boats, set there by those who come to pray at her feet. But most of all there are boats, of all shapes and sorts, brought by her children, the *Terreneuvas*. And she looks down, smiling wisely, upon the men that kneel before her, and upon the mass of their up-turned faces, bronzed and worn by the usage of the sea; and upon the women behind, the white-capped women who carry the great *sabots* of their men, and here and there one who comes empty-handed and has no *sabots* to carry. And perhaps too, in her wisdom, she sees those who are not there, who have stayed behind in the fogs and the storms of the Banks. As the sunshine rushes in at the open door, and the boats and banners about her lift and stir; as she looks down, wisely smiling, the singing begins again, sweetly, familiarly,—*Hail, Star of the Sea!*

The winter passes on, slowly enough; but to all whose men go to the fishings, too fast. It is February now, and in the villages about St. Malo there is a commencing stir and movement. The time for love-making and marriage is over; already one has to think of making ready to depart. The last month will pass so inconceivably fast in a whirl of work, of excitement, even of amusement; for the *Terreneuvas* must go, but so long as may be, the *Terreneuvas* must laugh, or else—

It begins with the Review. Some morning towards the end of February one finds St. Malo full of life and movement, a movement that directs itself steadily towards the Mairie in a constant unending stream. The streets are crowded with a busy, bustling

swarm of men, women, and children; one looks along them and perceives a bobbing surface of flat blue caps and white *coiffes* of every shape and size. One can count by the shapes of the *coiffes* a score of districts that have emptied themselves upon St. Malo; everywhere there is noise, bustle, excitement; this is the beginning of the end, the beginning of the departure.

The men go to the Mairie, where they enter, leaving the square outside full of waiting women and children; through the windows one can see nothing inside but a dense crowd of blue figures. If one pushes into the vestibule, one hears an official voice reading over the conditions of engagement and the lists of the ship-owners, with whom, in the little *cafés* about the Grand Porte or elsewhere, they have signed bonds. And all who have signed must be here to-day, each to accept the conditions, and to answer, when he hears his name, *Présent*. Slowly, laboriously, list after list is gone through; first it is perhaps the turn of the Anne-Marie, then of the Dieu-Aide, the Marie-Mère, the Belle-Etoile,—*goëlette* after *goëlette*, schooner after schooner, list after list, a long monotonous succession of names, quaint uncouth Breton names that trip strangely on French tongues; and always the answering *Présent*. When the lists are called over, not here, but some day next summer, on the Anne-Marie or the Dieu-Aide, or another, there will be those, perhaps, who will not answer to their names. But to-morrow, and every day till the end of the month, the Mairie will be full of men, and the monotonous voice will go on incessantly, reading the lists till all have been gone over, all the five or six thousand names of the men that the Clos-Poulet<sup>1</sup> sends to the Banks.

Those who have answered, who

<sup>1</sup> *Clos-Poulet*, the local name for the district round St. Malo.

have "passed the Review," and whose engagements are formally ratified and registered, go out into the square where the women and children are waiting, and move on again, not in a single stream but in diverging groups to the various offices of the ship-owners to receive their advance. The advance is calculated on an average season; when the ship-owner finds himself out of pocket in the autumn after a poor fishing, he makes it up by beating down the men on their next agreements; it is always the year after a bad season that the men gain less. But ordinarily the advance is covered by the result of the fishings; and not seldom there is even a little more to be distributed among them when they return home. It is a serious matter, this, of receiving the advance; a sum of £16, £18, or £20 is to the Terreneuvés a fortune. Out of it he must get what he needs, to add to, or renew, his outfit for the Banks; the rest goes to the mother, the wife, the children, for them to live on during the summer, and to put by, if they can, a little for next winter, when the *gars* will be at home again, hungry, to be fed. And it is partly to buy what is necessary, and partly to watch over the remainder lest too much of it find its way into wineshop or *café*, that the women come always with their men to the Review. One can watch them in little groups of threes and fours, the *gars* with his wife or mother, and perhaps a couple of children trotting behind, going from shop to shop bargaining, cheapening, spending an hour to save a single sou; and the shops make ready for them by hanging out temptingly all their wares. Consequently the streets are gay; here are great yellow oilskins and sou'-westers; brilliant green blankets and striped rugs; there are the stout cottons to make the bags of chaff which are all their bedding, in

gaudy checks of orange, red, and blue. There are blue jerseys, flat woollen caps, huge knitted comforters, and padded gloves; there are high boots coming up to the knee, and green or scarlet socks, and piles of great heavy *sabots*. And all the smaller shops have set out shelves spread with cheap sweetmeats and oranges, coloured paper flowers and common toys; or with bright ribbons and gaily-coloured pins and rings and brooches; while up and down the street men pass, bearing trays or baskets and selling trifles of all sorts, which they cry monotonously. *Ki-kiri-Ki!* chants the merchant of caramel apples, with his forest of scarlet balls, perched on slender sticks, *Ki-kiri-Ki!* and the seller of *berlingots*, which are sweetmeats, responds,

À la vanille pour les p'tit's filles,  
Au citron pour les garçons—

enumerating his wares in a rude but tuneful rhyme; and there are all the other odd trifles which are sold at a Brittany fair; "Japanese eggs," "tongues of my mother-in-law," lobsters, perhaps, in scarlet wool, and black Madagascar monkeys dancing at the end of a string; dolls that are mere shapeless wedges of wood; serpents for throwing, *confetti*, bunches of paper flowers; and certainly somewhere, perhaps in the arching of the gate, a long row of pictures set up against the wall, indescribably religious, and an open umbrella full of small ones, splendidly red and blue and green,—“All at a sou, *la Bonne Vierge, la Vierge des Terreneuvés*.”

And outside on the quay the fair has begun: there are booths, lotteries, roundabouts; there are huge baskets of *cimereaux*, the quaintly shaped biscuits that have been made without change for something like a thousand years in this corner of High Brittany; there are sausages smoking hot, and

*galettes*, the flat buckwheat cakes, which should be eaten soaked in cider. The fair has begun, the fair which means that the Terreneuvas have money in their pockets, and wives or sweethearts or children for whom something must be bought; the fair that will not finish till the last of the boats has started for the Banks. And along the quay to the ferry-boat, and on the roads leading inland, there is a cheerful traffic as the day draws in: the *gars* with his concertina and a paper flower pinned to his coat, playing interminably, singing in snatches; the women laden with parcels, grave with the consciousness of much money in their pockets and the nearness of departure; and the children, their hands filled with toys, cakes, sweets, wholly content and uninquisitive. For them, at least, the Review is a day of days, not to be forgotten.

Once the Review is passed the lading goes on briskly; and in the dock, on the quay beside which the schooners are drawn up three deep, there is a continuous bustle. There is an incessant sound of hammering, the ringing of iron upon iron, the shrill roar of many voices; there are men painting the hulks, repairing the dories, reshipping the masts; men slung in the rigging, men clattering in *sabots* from vessel to vessel, the thump of falling boxes, the creak of innumerable cranes. There is a noisy engine snorting as it drags a row of trucks along the quay; waggon come up drawn by long lines of horses; the piles of boxes, barrels, bundles waiting to be taken on board grow steadily bigger. And here and there, in the midst of the confusion, peaceably at home, a little dog is coiled upon its mat, a cat licks itself imperturbably. They, too, are going "out there."

A gray-haired sailor with a cigarette behind his ear finds a moment's time to talk. "We start late," he

says, with a nod to the nearest brig; "but we shall be out as soon as any, the *Enfant de Marie* sails fast. Yes the last season was a good one. There were few storms; but I lost my two sons. They went away in a dory and,—they did not come back. They were good lads." They did not come back. That is the requiem, the epitaph of so many among them. Their dories pass into the fog, their *goëlettes* go down in the storms; perhaps there is word sent home, or perhaps, in the autumn, the women wait daily for their *gars*, and they do not come back.

The gray-haired sailor has a story to tell of the Terreneuvas and the dock.

One of them had left at home, at St. Malo, a wife and a little daughter, under the protection of the good Virgin who watches over those who must stay behind. And before he started, he promised his little daughter that he would bring her, when he came home, a great doll with blue eyes and yellow curls like the English children she saw in summer. And lest he should forget his promise, he bought the doll as soon as he reached St. Pierre et Miquelon and laid it in the top of his long black box, along with the little plaster Virgin. But one day he too went away in his dory, and did not come back; and when the boats returned in late autumn, there was only the long black box for his wife who waited for her *gars*.

It was Christmas Eve, they say, and the little daughter woke up in the darkness. Her mother was asleep; the box had come home only that night and she had spent herself in tears; she did not wake when the child got up and scrambled towards the thing that stood in the corner. It had not been there when she went to sleep, but surely, surely she had seen it before. The lid was open, and

in the top, beside the little plaster Virgin, lay a great doll with blue eyes and yellow curls like the English children that came in summer. "Papa, papa," she cried. "Papa, where are you? You have come home, since you have brought my doll." The mother was spent with tears and slept; the child wandered out into the night with the doll in her arms, calling always, "Papa, papa!" And in front of her she saw the masts of the *goëlettes*, and the gleam of the water, and she went on, on, calling always "Papa, papa!" The bells of the churches rang out the Christmas chimes, and at home the weary mother still slept. But in the morning a little figure floated in the dock, a little figure that clasped its arms about a great doll with blue eyes and yellow hair like the English children that come in summer.

Day by day, once March has come, the *goëlettes* slip out upon the tide; the quay grows clearer, while in the bay the schooners lie at anchor, to take on board their men and finally to set sail. It is fine favourable weather, the sea freshly purple under a clear young sun; the boats lift in the water as if in haste to be off. And day by day the men come in from the country with their bedding and their long black boxes, with much noise but less sobriety; they stagger down from the town, full of laughter and liquor, playing their concertinas, shouting, singing; and the *gendarmes* go from wineshop to *café* to seek out the laggards, who at the last would so fain stay at home. While all the time, on the quays of St. Malo, the fair goes on, feverishly gay, because there are still Terreneuvas at home with money to spend, and the Terreneuvas must laugh, or else——

Towards the end of March a couple of big steamers come into the bay, and pass with the first tide into the outer

basin, where they make fast to the quays. They will start at once for the Banks, with all who are bound for St. Pierre et Miquelon; between them they have to take out some three thousand men. There is a constantly increasing bustle about them; the black boxes are taken on board by hundreds, the bedding lies upon the quay in many-coloured heaps. They start to-day with the evening tide, and St. Malo turns itself bodily outside its walls to see them off.

Round the steamers and along the quay there is a huge unceasing noise and movement. The organs of the *carrousels* thunder; every booth has its trumpet, cymbals, or drum; there is an indescribable merriment which is yet not gay. Sweetmeats are flung, serpents are thrown; there are men pushing through the press, selling pencils, notebooks, toys, cakes, chaplets. Near the steamers a lane is kept open with difficulty through the dense mass of people, and the men who are embarking pass along it. The *gars* turns with a last kiss and embrace to the men who have come with him so far,—he has left his women on the outskirts—and then passes on, with a struggle, to the gangway; he is flushed and noisy and perchance has a bulging pocket. The *douaniers* stop him and search him rapidly; a bottle appears and is tossed over the side, where it strikes against the quay with a crash of breaking glass. The crowd breaks into a shrill appreciative shout of laughter, and the *gars* is on board, flushed still, but a little shamefaced and less triumphant. At least he, and the others, will presently be sober; and the steamer will not be for the whole of her voyage, as sometimes happened in former years, no better than an insufficient cage for some two thousand drunken fishermen.

Now it is time and the noise

grows deafening; the steam-whistles roar plaintively a call to the laggards; the crowd grows denser, late-comers fight their way through it, and friends yell loud messages to those already on board. The last boxes are dumped into the hold, the last bedding flung over the side; the good *abbé* who goes yearly with his men to share their dangers, and comfort and nurse them when he may, lifts his hat and waves it, as he stands, a tall black figure, upon the bridge; a last roar from the whistles, a last shout from the crowd, and the vessel swings out slowly with a strip of water widening between her and the quay.

Then there is a race to the breakwater, where the women are crowded already, to watch the steamers rounding out into the bay. They pass so close that one can see the faces of the men clustered upon the decks, upon the bulwarks, upon the rigging; one can see, presently, the *abbé* lift his hat again and wave it. And then three thousand voices begin to sing the hymn of the Terreneuvas, the *Ave Maris Stella*, and as they pass on slowly into the open, it floats back like a farewell,—*Felix cæli porta*.

The women on the breakwater go home quietly; there is time enough for tears. And St. Malo goes home too, and Notre Dame de la Grand Porte looks down continually on all who pass beneath. The dock is empty and the quay silent; the water runs like an empty lane to the church among the trees at the far end. The villages of the Clos-Poulet are silent too, and the goodwife puts back the great chair in the corner, to stay there till the autumn, when, please God and the good Virgin, the *gars* will come home to sit in it again.

And outside now the sky is blue, and the hedgerows purple with the

sap rising in the twigs; there are primroses yellowing the banks. It is spring, and the Terreneuvas are away.

May has come, and it is the day of the Confirmation. St. Malo is gay with white and blue banners; the sun shines with the peculiar radiance which it keeps here for holidays, and the streets are so clean that they will not soil the whitest slippers of all the white-clad girls. Down the steps into the church they troop, white from head to foot, in a long procession; they sit in the nave, where the light from the window of the Mary Chapel falls and touches them with flecks of red and blue or gold. In the dark arches of the church all the lights are lit, and there are circles and crowns and pyramids of twinkling candles; the great altar is ablaze with them, and everywhere there is a network of lights starred against the gloom. And on his throne in the chancel, beneath a purple canopy, sits the Cardinal Archbishop.

In the nave where the light from the window of the Mary Chapel falls, the girls sit, a close mass of white, flecked with blue and crimson; and on the other side the boys, with white scarves knotted about their arms. Among the boys there are men, gray-haired and weather-worn, their faces bronzed and their eyes vague with the long-sightedness of the sea. Year after year, each time that the Cardinal Archbishop has come to St. Malo, they have been away, "out there," in the *goëlettes*; year after year, since, as little lads, they first went to the fishings. It is so long ago that they can scarcely remember. Now the time has come when they must stay behind and let the *goëlettes* sail without them, for they have grown old and earned their idleness. And so, though it is May, they are at



home, here among the white young girls and the round-faced boys, and they look sometimes to where in the Mary Chapel a ship hangs, and in the movement of the air lifts and dips as if she felt the water splashing round her sides; they look at it, and at the figure beyond that holds out her hands as if in greeting. These are the Terreneuvas who have come home.

Summer is past, and St. Malo is preparing for winter; but the sunshine lies hot on her ramparts and her quays, and the leaves on the trees have not yet lost all their green. Again the town is gaily dressed; the streets are bright with banners and streamers, and the bells in the single pointing spire ring out merrily. It is the Feast of the Rosary. Slowly down from the church the long procession winds, passing the Grande Porte which is splendid with a blaze of candles in the niche above the gate, where the figure stands with the Child in her arms, looking down eternally; and as one glances up at her, almost one sees her full lids quiver, and her narrow mouth lift itself into a smile. Slowly the procession passes on to the quay outside the walls, slowly, for it is long and the children who walk in it are young, and the priests and sisters who guide them are few among so many.

There are girls in white, tiny children crowned with flowers, elder ones in long enveloping veils; group after group, they carry embroidered banners and emblems of the creed, the Pater-noster, the Ave Maria. There are glittering statuettes, the lilies of the Annunciation, the cradle of the Nativity; group after group with countless banners, an endless line of children, of girls in white and boys in red; and then a huge rosary of moss and flowers carried shoulder high by tall

white-veiled figures. And just before the *curé* and the choir, a knot of tiny boys dressed as sailors in white and blue, carrying a dainty ship, the Star of the Sea.

Slowly the procession moves on till it reaches an altar built up against the ramparts, a mass of rocks, a boat dashing up against them, the foot draped with long grass like sea-weed; and on the rock the Virgin standing with hands outstretched as if in greeting. The boat is filled with tiny boys, dressed like the others in white and blue as sailors; and as the crowd presses up and the procession passes along slowly, the boys in the boat kneel and, lifting their hands towards the Virgin, they begin to sing: *Ave Maris Stella, Dei Mater Alma!*

The sun shines brilliantly on the white veils of the girls, on the banners, the statuettes, on the tall crucifix; it shines on the upturned faces of the crowd, on the rocks and the boat, on the white Virgin and the little children that kneel and sing to her. And beyond, it shines on the sea, so blue to-day, so infinitely calm.

There was a schooner came home lately bringing with it some men from a *goëlette* wrecked in a storm off the Banks. They had been picked up half-dead floating on spars; and they said that in the storm, themselves beyond hope, they had seen another boat sink near them. She had gone down with her crew kneeling on her deck and singing, "*Ave, Maris Stella! Hail, Star of the Sea!*" The name of her was not known. Only she was lost, she and her crew that sang as these children were singing now; and who, perhaps long ago, when they were little lads, had themselves been chosen to sing and kneel in the boat dashing upon the mimic rocks at the Feast of the Rosary. She was lost, she and her crew. These are the Terreneuvas who do not come home.

## THE REMARKABLES OF CAPTAIN HIND,

JAMES HIND, the Master Thief of England, the fearless Captain of the Highway, was born at Chipping Norton in 1618. His father, a simple saddler, had so poor an appreciation of his son's magnanimity, that he apprenticed him to a butcher; but Hind's destiny was to imbrue his hands in other than the blood of oxen, and he had not long endured the restraint of this common craft, when forty shillings, the gift of his mother, purchased him an escape, and carried him triumphant and ambitious to London. Even in his negligent schooldays he had fastened upon a fitting career. A born adventurer, he sought only enterprise and command; if a commission in the army failed him then he would risk his neck upon the road, levying his own tax and imposing his own conditions. To one of his dauntless resolution an opportunity need never have lacked, yet he owed his first preferment to a happy accident. Surprised one evening in a drunken brawl, he was hustled into the Poultry Counter, and there made acquaintance over a fresh bottle with Robert Allen, one of the chief rogues in the Park, and a ruffian who had mastered every trick in the game of plunder. A dexterous pickpocket, an intrepid blade, Allen had also the keenest eye for untested talent, and he detected Hind's shining qualities after the first glass. No sooner had they paid the price of release, than Hind was admitted of his comrade's gang; he took the oath of fealty, and by way of winning his spurs was bid to hold up a traveller on Shooter's Hill. Granted his choice

of a mount, he straightway took the finest in the stable, with that keen perception of horseflesh which never deserted him, and he confronted his first victim in the liveliest of humours. There was no falter in his voice, no hint of inexperience in his manner, when he shouted the battle-cry, *Stand and deliver!* The horseman, fearful of his life, instantly surrendered a purse of ten sovereigns, as to the most practised assailant on the road. Whereupon Hind, with a flourish of ancient courtesy, gave him twenty shillings to bear his charges. "This," said he, "is for handsale sake"; and thus they parted with mutual compliment and content.

Allen was overjoyed at his novice's prowess. "Did you not see," he cried to his companions, "how he robbed him with a grace?" And the trooper deserved his captain's compliment, since his art was perfect from the first. In bravery as in gallantry he knew no rival, and he plundered with so elegant a style that only a churlish victim could resent the extortion. He would as soon have turned his back upon an enemy, as demand a purse uncovered. For every man he had a quip, for every woman a compliment; nor did he ever conceal the truth that the means were for him as important as the end. Though he loved money, he still insisted that it should be yielded in freedom and good temper; and while he emptied more coaches than any man in England, he was never at a loss for admirers. Under Allen he served a brilliant apprenticeship; enrolled as a servant, he speedily sat

at the master's right hand, and his nimble genius devised many a pretty campaign. For a while success dogged the horse-hoofs of the gang; with wealth came immunity, and not one of the warriors had the misfortune to look out upon the world through a grate. They robbed with dignity, even with splendour. Now they would drive forth in a coach and four, carrying with them a whole armoury of offensive weapons; now they would take the road apparelled as noblemen, and attended at a discreet distance by their proper servants. But recklessness brought the inevitable disaster, and it was no less a personage than Oliver Cromwell who overcame the hitherto invincible Allen. A handful of the gang attacked Oliver on his way from Huntingdon, but the marauders were outmatched, and most of them forced to surrender. Allen, taken red-handed, swung at Tyburn; but Hind, with his better mount and defter horsemanship, rode clear away.

The loss of his friend was a lesson in caution, and henceforth Hind resolved to follow his craft in solitude. He had embellished his native talent with all the instruction that others could impart, and he reflected that he who rode alone neither ran risk of discovery nor had any need to share his booty. Thus he began his easy, untrammelled career, making time and space of no account by his rapid, fearless journeys. Now he was prancing the moors of Yorkshire, now he was scouring the plain between Gloucester and Tewkesbury; but, wherever he went, he had a purse in his pocket and a jest on his tongue. To recall his prowess is to ride with him under the open sky along the fair beaten road, to put up at the white, busy posthouse, to drink unnumbered pints of mulled sack with the round-bellied landlord, to exchange boastful stories

over the hospitable fire, and to go forth in the morning with the joyous uncertainty of travel upon you. Failure alone lay outside his experience; and he presently became at once the terror and the hero of England.

Not only was his courage conspicuous, luck also was his constant companion; and a happy bewitchment protected him for three years against the possibility of harm. He had been lying at Hatfield, at the George Inn, and had set out betimes for London. As he neared the town gate, an old beldame begged an alms of him, and though Hind, not liking her ill-favoured visage, would have spurred forward, the beldame's glittering eye held his horse motionless. "Good woman," cried Hind, flinging her a crown, "I am in haste; pray let me pass." "Sir," answered the witch, "three days I have awaited your coming. Would you have me lose my labour now?" Thus, with Hind's assent, the Sphinx delivered her message. "Captain Hind," said she, "your life is beset with constant danger, and since from your birth I have wished you well, my poor skill has devised a perfect safeguard." With that she gave him a small box, containing what might have been a sundial or compass. "Watch this star," quoth she, "and when you know not your road, follow its guidance. So shall you be preserved from every peril for the space of three years. Thereafter, if you still have faith in my devotion, seek me again, and I will renew the virtue of the charm." Hind took the box joyfully, but when he turned to murmur a word of gratitude, the witch struck his nag's flanks with a white wand; the horse leaped vehemently forward, and Hind saw his benefactress no more. Henceforth, however, a warning voice spoke to him as plainly as did the demon to Socrates, and had he but obeyed the

beldame's admonition, he might have escaped a violent death. For he passed the last day of the third year at the siege of Youghall, where he was wounded, and whence he presently regained England, to his own undoing.

So long as he kept to the road, his life was one long comedy. His wit and address were inexhaustible, and fortune never found him at a loss. He would avert suspicion with the tune of a psalm, as when, habited as a pious shepherd, he broke a traveller's head with his crook, and deprived him of his horse. An early adventure was to force a pot-valiant parson, who had drunk a cup too much at a wedding, into a rarely farcical situation. Hind, having robbed two gentlemen's servants of a round sum, went ambling along the road until he encountered a parson. "Sir," said he, "I am closely pursued by robbers. You, I dare swear, will not stand by and see me plundered." Before the parson could protest, he thrust a pistol into his hand, and bade him fire it at the first comer, while he rode off to raise the county. Meanwhile, the rifled travellers came up with the parson, who straightway, mistaking them for thieves, fired without effect, and then, riding forward, flung the pistol in the face of the nearest. Thus the parson of the parish was dragged before the magistrate, while Hind, before his dupe could furnish an explanation, had placed many a mile between himself and his adversaries.

But, though he could on occasion show a clean pair of heels, Hind was never lacking in valiance; and another time, meeting a traveller with a hundred pounds in his pocket, he challenged him to fight there and then, staked his own horse against the hundred pounds, and declared that he should be the winner who drew first blood. "If I win," said the magnani-

mous Captain, "I will give you ten pounds for your journey. If you win, you shall give me your servant's horse." The terms were instantly accepted, and in two minutes Hind had run his adversary through the sword-arm. Then, finding that his victim was but a poor squire, bound for London to pay his composition, he not only returned his money, but sought him out a surgeon, and gave him the best dinner the countryside could afford. Thus it was his pleasure to act as a providence, many a time robbing Peter to pay Paul, and stripping the niggard that he might indulge his fervent love of generosity. Of all usurers and bailiffs he had a wholesome horror, and merry was the prank which he played upon the extortionate money-lender of Warwick. Riding on an easy rein through the town, Hind heard a tumult at a street corner, and, inquiring the cause, was told that an inn-keeper was arrested by a thievish usurer for a paltry twenty pounds. Dismounting, this providence in jack-boots discharged the debt, cancelled the bond, and claimed the inn-keeper's goods for his own security. And thereupon overtaking the usurer, "My friend," he exclaimed, "I lent you late a sum of twenty pounds. Repay it at once, or I take your miserable life." The usurer was compelled to return the money, with another twenty for interest, and when he would take the law of the innkeeper, was shown the bond duly cancelled, and was flogged well-nigh to death for his pains.

So Hind rode the world up and down, redressing grievances like an Eastern monarch, and rejoicing in the abasement of the evildoer. Nor was the spirit of his adventure bounded by the ocean. More than once he crossed the seas; the Hague knew him, and Amsterdam, though these somnolent cities gave small occasion

for his talent. It was from Scilly that he crossed to the Isle of Man, where, being recommended to Lord Derby, he gained high favour, and received in exchange for his jests a comfortable stipend. Hitherto, said the Chronicles, thieving was unknown in the island. A man might walk whither he would, a bag of gold in one hand, a switch in the other, and fear no danger. But no sooner had Hind appeared at Douglas, than honest citizens were pilfered at every corner. In dismay they sought the protection of the Governor, who suspected Hind, and gallantly disclosed his suspicions. "My Lord," exclaimed Hind, a blush upon his cheek, "I protest my innocence, but willingly will I suffer the heaviest penalty of your law if I am recognised for the thief." The victims confronted with their robber, knew him not, picturing to the Governor a monster with long hair and unkempt beard. Hind, acquitted with apologies, fetched from his lodging the disguise of periwig and beard. "They laugh who win!" he murmured, and thus forced forgiveness and a chuckle even from his judges.

As became a gentleman-adventurer, Captain Hind was staunch in his loyalty to the murdered King. To strip the wealthy was always reputable, but to rob a regicide was a masterpiece of well-doing. A fervent zeal to lighten Cromwell's pocket had brought the illustrious Allen to the gallows. But Hind was not one whit abashed, and he would never forego the chance of an encounter with his country's enemies. His treatment of Hugh Peters in Enfield Chace is among his triumphs. At the first encounter the Presbyterian plucked up courage to oppose his adversary with texts. To Hind's command of *Stand and deliver*, duly enforced with a loaded pistol, the ineffable Peters

replied, with ox-eye sanctimoniously upturned, "Thou shalt not steal; let him that stole, steal no more;" adding thereto other variations of the eighth commandment. Hind immediately countered with exhortations against the awful sin of murder, and rebuked the blasphemy of the Regicides, who, to defend their own infamy, would wrest Scripture from its meaning. "Did you not, oh monster of iniquity," mimicked Hind in the preacher's own voice, "pervert for your own advantage the words of the Psalmist, who said, 'Bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron'? Moreover, was it not Solomon who said, 'Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry.' And is not my soul hungry for gold and for the Regicides' discomfiture?" Peters was still fumbling after texts, when the final argument, "Deliver thy money, or I will send thee out of the world!" frightened him into submission, and thirty broad pieces were Hind's reward.

Not long after he confronted Bradshaw near Sherborne, and having taken from him a purse fat with Jacobuses, he bade the Sergeant stand uncovered, while he delivered a discourse upon gold, thus shaped by tradition: "Ay, marry, sir, this is the metal that wins my heart for ever! Oh, precious gold, I admire and adore thee as much as Bradshaw, Prynne, or any villain of the same stamp. This is that incomparable medicament, which the Republican physicians call the wonder-working plaster. It is truly catholic in operation, and somewhat akin to the Jesuit's powder, but more effectual. The virtues of it are strange and various; it makes justice deaf as well as blind, and takes out spots of the deepest treason more cleverly than castle-soap does common stains; it alters a man's constitution in two



or three days, more than the virtuoso's transfusion of blood can do in seven years. 'Tis a great alexiopharmick, and helps poisonous principles of rebellion, and those that use them. It miraculously exalts and purifies the eyesight, and makes traitors behold nothing but innocence in the blackest malefactors. 'Tis a mighty cordial for a declining cause ; it stifles faction or schism, as certainly as the itch is destroyed by butter and brimstone. In a word, it makes wise men fools, and fools wise men, and both knaves. The very colour of this precious balm is bright and dazzling. If it be properly applied to the first, that is, in a decent manner and a competent dose, it infallibly performs all the cures which the evils of humanity crave." Thus having spoken, he killed the six horses of Bradshaw's coach, and went contemptuously on his way.

But he was not a Cavalier merely in sympathy, nor was he content to prove his loyalty by robbing Roundheads. He, too, would strike a blow for his King ; and he showed, first with the royal army in Scotland, and afterwards at Worcester, what he dared in a righteous cause. Indeed it was his part in the unhappy battle that cost him his life ; and there is a strange irony in the reflection that, on the selfsame day, when Sir Thomas Urquhart lost his precious manuscripts, the neck of James Hind was made ripe for the halter. His capture was due to treachery. Towards the end of 1651 he was lodged with one Denzys, a barber, over against St. Dunstan's Church in Fleet Street. Maybe he had chosen his hiding-place for its neighbourhood to Moll Cutpurse's own sanctuary. But a pack of traitors discovered him, and haling him before the Speaker of the House of Commons, got him committed forthwith to Newgate. At first he was charged with theft and murder, and

was actually condemned for killing George Sympson at Knole in Berkshire. But the day after his sentence, an Act of Oblivion was passed, and Hind was put upon trial for treason. During his examination he behaved with the utmost gaiety, boastfully enlarging upon his services to the King's cause. "These are filthy jingling spurs," said he as he left the bar pointing to the irons about his legs, "but I hope to exchange them ere long." His good humour remained with him to the end. He jested in prison, as he jested on the road, and it was with a light heart that he mounted the scaffold built for him at Worcester. His was the fate reserved for traitors ; he was hanged, drawn, and quartered, and though his head was privily stolen and buried on the day of execution, his quarters were displayed upon the town-walls, until time and the birds destroyed them utterly.

Thus died the most distinguished highwayman that ever drew rein upon an English road ; and he died the death of a hero. The unnumbered crimes of violence and robbery where-with he might have been charged, weighed not a feather's weight upon his destiny ; he suffered not in the cause of plunder, but in the cause of Charles Stuart. And in thus excusing his death, his contemporaries did him scant justice. For while in treasonable loyalty he had a thousand rivals, on the road he was the first exponent of the grand manner. The middle of the seventeenth century was, in fact, the golden age of the Road. Not only were all highwaymen Cavaliers, but many a Cavalier turned highwayman. Broken at their King's defeat, a hundred captains took pistol and vizard, and revenged themselves as freebooters upon the King's enemies. And though Hind was outlaw first and royalist afterwards, he was the

most brilliant collector of them all. True, he owed something to his master Allen, but he added from the storehouse of his own genius a host of new precepts, and he was the first to establish an enduring tradition. Before all things he insisted upon courtesy; a guinea stolen by an awkward ruffian was a sorry theft; levied by a gentleman of the highway, it was the tribute paid to courage by generosity. Nothing would atone for an insult offered to a lady; and when it was Hind's duty to seize part of a gentlewoman's dowry on the Petersfield road, he not only pleaded his necessity in eloquent excuse, but he made many promises on behalf of knight-errantry and damsels in distress. Never would he extort a trinket to which association had given a sentimental worth; during a long career he left none save a Roundhead penniless upon the road; nor was it his custom to strip the master without giving the man a trifle for his pains. His courage, moreover, was equal to his understanding. Since he was afraid of nothing, it was not his habit to bluster when he was not determined to have his way. Once his pistol levelled, once the solemn order given, the victim must either fight or surrender; and Hind was not the man to decline a combat with any weapons or in any circumstances. Like the true artist that he was, he neglected no detail of his craft. As he was a perfect shot, so also he was a finished horseman; and his skill not only secured him against capture, but also helped him to the theft of such horses as his necessities required, or to the exchange of a worn-out jade for a mettled prancer. Once upon a time a credulous farmer offered twenty pounds and his own gelding for the Captain's mount. Hind struck a bargain at once, and as they jogged along

the road, persuaded the farmer to set his newly purchased horse at the tallest hedge, the broadest ditch. The bumpkin failed, as Hind knew he would fail; and begging the loan for an instant of his ancient steed, Hind not only showed what horsemanship could accomplish, but straightway rode off with the better horse, and twenty pounds in his pocket. So marvellously did his reputation grow, that it became a distinction to be outwitted by him, and the brains of innocent men were racked to invent strange tricks which might have been put upon them by the illustrious Captain. Thus livelier jests and madder exploits were fathered upon him than upon any of his kind, and he has remained for two centuries the prime favourite of the Chap-books.

Robbing alone, he could afford to despise pedantry; did he meet a traveller who amused his fancy, he would give him the pass-word ("the fiddler's paid," or what not), as though the highway had not its code of morals; and he did not scruple, when it served his purpose, to rob the bunglers of his own profession. By this means, indeed, he raised the standard of the road, and warned the incompetent to embrace an easier trade. While he never took a shilling without sweetening his depredation with a joke, he was, like all humorists, an acute philosopher. "Remember what I tell you," said he to the foolish persons who once attempted to rob him, the master-thief of England; "disgrace not yourself for small sums, but aim high, and for great ones; the least will bring you to the gallows." There, in six lines, is the theory of thieving, and many a poor devil has leaped from the cart to his last dance because he neglected the admirable counsel of the illustrious Hind. Among his aversions were lawyers and thief-catchers. "Truly I could wish," he

exclaimed in court, "that full-fed fees were as little used in England among lawyers, as the eating of swine's-flesh was among the Jews." When you remember the terms of friendship whereon he lived with Moll Cutpurse, his hatred of the thief-catcher who would hang his brother for "the lucre of ten pounds which is the reward," or who would swallow a false oath "as easily as one would do buttered fish," is a trifle mysterious. But perhaps before his death an estrangement had divided Hind and Moll. Was it that the Roaring Girl was too anxious to take the credit of his success? Or did he harbour an unjust suspicion that, when the last descent was made upon him at the barber's, Moll had given an unfriendly warning?

Of this he made no confession, but the honest thief was always a liberal hater of spies and attorneys, and Hind's prudence is unquestioned. A

miracle of intelligence, a master of style, he excelled all his contemporaries and set up for posterity an unattainable standard. The eighteenth century flattered him by its imitation; but cowardice and swagger compel it to limp many a dishonourable league behind. Despite the single inspiration of dancing a corant upon the green, Claude Duval, compared to Hind, was an empty braggart. Captain Stafford spoiled the best of his effects with a more than brutal vice. Neither Mull-Sack nor the Golden Farmer, for all their long life and handsome plunder, is comparable for an instant to the robber of Peters and Bradshaw. They kept their fist fiercely upon the gold of others, and cared not by what artifice it was extorted. But Hind never took a sovereign meanly; he approached no enterprise which he did not adorn. Living in a true Augustan age, he was a classic among highway-men, the very Virgil of the Road.

## A SUBTERRANEAN ADVENTURE.

I HAVE always sympathised with the American girl, who, upon being told that she might not go to the photographer, said, "I guess I'll go and have a tooth out then." It was much the same feeling that prompted us (my sister and I) while wintering last year in Switzerland to visit the salt-mines at Bex. We had long since exhausted all the possibilities of life at Montreux, and were beginning to wonder how on earth we should be able to get through the remaining six weeks of our stay. It was at this juncture that one morning, while listlessly turning over the pages of Baedeker, my attention was arrested by the following passage: "The salt-mines at Bex should be visited by every intelligent traveller, and are within easy reach of Montreux by either train or carriage."

"The very thing!" I said. "For once we will come under the heading of intelligent travellers. And now I come to think of it, I have always wanted to see a salt-mine. I have heard they are not only instructive but very pretty and interesting."

We determined to set off first thing in the morning for Bex. Our proposal met with some opposition from the kind old lady who had burdened herself with the unenviable task of taking care of us while we were abroad. "Why can't you enjoy yourselves in a rational manner," she said, when she heard where we wanted to go, "instead of rushing all over the country, keeping me in a perpetual simmer for fear of what you may want to do next? Besides," she added, "with a concili-

atory look at the old maid with whom she had just been discussing our eccentricities, "I don't think it is *quite* the thing for two young girls to go about as you do in strange places without a chaperone."

"Do I look as though I required a chaperone?" my sister asked, pulling up her shirt-collar with an aggressively masculine air.

"Very badly," the old lady replied. "You are far too pretty for a New Woman! However, into salt-mines I cannot be expected to follow you, so I suppose you must go alone; only do be careful, and don't do anything foolish."

Accordingly, with all sorts of promises and a basket of provisions, we set off the following day to catch the train from Territet.

"How jolly it is to get away for a whole day from that stupid hotel!" Ada said, crunching the snow under her hobnailed boots, and brandishing her alpenstock in a way that quite alarmed an old Russian count who happened to be going in as we came out of the hotel. "*Quelle belle sauvage!*" I heard him whisper to his companion, as we passed; and glancing at Ada's Newmarket coat, and the wideawake hat pressed ruthlessly down on her rebellious curls, I could not wonder at his mingled admiration and dismay.

We were only just in time to catch the train, and were ignominiously bundled into a crowded third-class carriage the atmosphere of which was anything but ethereal.

"Do you think I might venture to open the window?" Ada said, wedg-

ing herself in between it and an oily-looking monk, who sat praying and stewing in contented bliss.

"Please do," I gasped with a despairing look at my neighbours, a stout party with a baby, and a soldier smoking the most villainous tobacco. Very stealthily, and with the air of a criminal, Ada let down the window inch by inch, until she was able to get her head right out; and in that position she remained blissfully ignorant of the dark looks and ominous mutterings of our fellow-passengers. The monk pulled his cowl further over his bald head, and looked with an air of holy resignation at my stout neighbour, who glared at me as though I had already murdered the innocent babe upon her lap. The advent of the ticket-collector was hailed with delight; a chorus of complaints (in which *ces Anglaises* figured pretty freely) were poured forth, and the result was an authoritative command to Ada to shut down the window immediately.

"But one cannot breathe in such an atmosphere," she protested, with a pout that would have melted any one but a French railway official.

"All these people can breathe," he retorted angrily. "We do not go to the expense of heating the trains and then let the hot air out again by opening the windows." With this parting shot he left us once more hermetically sealed, and miserable. The monk smiled, the soldier laughed, the baby crowed, and altogether we felt that the place had become too hot for us in more senses than one.

"Let us go and sit outside," Ada said at last. "I'd rather be frozen than roasted alive any day." So forth we went, to the no small consternation of our enemies, who doubtless thought we were either mad or intent on suicide. The Swiss trains are arranged differently from the

English; the carriages run lengthways, with a door at each end leading on to a platform provided with steps at either side. Upon these steps we ensconced ourselves, and very comfortable we found them, the top one forming a support for the back, and the lower one serving as a footstool. "No more stuffy carriages for me," Ada said, thoroughly enjoying this novel way of seeing the country. "Why, it's as good as being on a jaunting car without the risk of being thrown out every five minutes."

We were quite sorry to arrive at our destination, an important-looking station with the inevitable *café*, and the still more inevitable string of omnibuses outside, the conductors of which nearly tore each other in pieces before we could make them understand that we wanted none of their hotels.

"The salt-mines! Nobody visits the salt-mines in the winter," they said, with an air of profound disgust, when at last we were allowed to speak. But this was merely ill-nature on their part, we felt sure; so, nothing daunted, we set out in the direction of the town, which could be seen nestling at the foot of the mountain, about three-quarters of a mile off.

"Is this the way to the salt-mines?" I asked of a little urchin skating along in front of us.

"But no, miss; you must cross that footpath over the fields, then go for a mile along the high road, take the third turning to the left, and you will come to a wall——"

"Upon which we shall be ready to sit, if we ever get there," Ada remarked, interrupting the flow of his eloquence; and rather crossly we retraced our steps till we came to the footpath indicated. The boy, (disappointed of his expected *sou*, no doubt,) called out after us in a jeering way, "You'll see no salt-mines at this time of the year!"



But to attend to what little boys say is idle, so we plodded on, glad that the day happened to be so fine, for we evidently had a long walk before us.

The high road was found, then the turning to the left, and then the wall upon which we sat and awaited further directions. The scene before us was like a Christmas card; the blue sky, the snow-capped mountains, the little *chalet*-shaped houses clustered round the village church; it only needed a picturesque figure or two to make it perfect. "I'm afraid I can't supply the deficiency," Ada said; but it was supplied very effectually in a short time by an old woman, who came tottering down the mountain-path, a bundle of newly gathered firewood on her back, and at her side a sweet little golden-haired cherub, who saluted us with a heavenly smile as he passed. I inquired of the old woman the nearest way to the salt-mine. Pointing with her bony finger towards the path she had just come down, "Go along there," she said, "till you come to some white cottages, and opposite them you will find the entrance to the mine,—though I doubt if you'll get into it," she muttered as she hobbled away.

"What provoking people they seem to be here," I said, still determined to hope for the best. "After all, one must have salt in winter just as much as in summer, so why should not the mines be on view?"

The walk up the mountain was worth all our pains; a regular Swiss walk, or climb, rather, for the path got steeper and steeper every moment, till we seemed to be making steadily for the clouds. "I'm sure that old woman must have been mistaken," Ada said, when after an hour's steady climbing we seemed no nearer our destination. However, we determined

to push on a little further, and were soon rewarded by catching a glimpse of something white, which proved to be the cottages of which we were in search; wretched little hovels they were, with not a sign of habitation about them, and no vestige of a mine in the vicinity.

"Most likely these are the miners' cottages," Ada said, "and the men will of course be at work; at any rate, let us go a little further; it is no use turning back now!"

The scenery got wilder and more desolate every moment, and I was just thinking what a propitious place this would be for a murder, when, coming down the path ahead of us we saw the most awful-looking tramp. Dressed in tattered clothes, and with a rough stick in his hand, he came upon us so suddenly that we had no time to think of a retreat. His appearance did not improve on closer inspection, one side of his face being horribly disfigured, the mouth drawn up and the eye down in a manner that was repulsive beyond measure.

"Let us turn and run for our lives!" I said. "I'm sure he's an escaped lunatic."

"Escaped grandmother!" was Ada's polite rejoinder; and to my horror, she walked straight up to the man, and with her most insinuating manner asked him if he happened to know the way to the salt-mines.

With a contortion that would have been a smile if it could, he replied that being one of the miners himself, he knew the way pretty well, and would be glad to show us the entrance, which we must have passed on our way up.

I went through a dumb pantomime with Ada to have nothing to do with the terrible creature, but she turned round and followed him as meekly as a lamb. "We have come to see the mines, and I intend to see them," was

her sole answer to my protestations. Even she was a little bit disturbed, however, when she heard that the mines were not on view in the winter; and that if we really wished to see them, our new friend would have to accompany us.

Our fate was however decided for us. We had now returned to the cottages, silent and deserted as before, except for a wretched little black and white kitten, that came running up the path to meet us, and with a happy mew of welcome rubbed itself affectionately against the ragged trousers of our guide. "That decides it," Ada said, cuddling to her breast the half-starved little arbiter. "He *must* be a nice sort of man or his kitten wouldn't be so fond of him; we will go into the mine with you," she continued, turning to the man who stood awaiting our decision.

It may have been imagination on my part, but, kitten or no kitten, I thought I saw a horrible leer of satisfaction pass over his face, as he took his wretched little animal, and diving into one of the cottages, emerged with two dirty-looking holland smocks, furnished, like monks' cloaks, with long pointed cowls. "What are those things for?" I asked, my idea of a salt-mine being a huge crystal-like cave lit up with electric light.

"You must put them on; it is very dirty in the mine," the man said; "and the roof is so low in some parts that your hats would be ruined, so you had better take them off, and draw the cowls over your heads."

I glanced at the dark, cavernous entrance, and it certainly looked as though we should have to go some little way before arriving at my fairy grotto; so, with a very ill grace, I took hold of the dubious garment, and wriggled into it as best I could. Peals of laughter from Ada did not serve to restore my equanimity. "You look

for all the world like Brother Pelican," she said, artistically arranging my cowl, and tying the rough hempen girdle round my waist. She did not take long to get into her medieval costume, and was still more amused when the man once more emerged from the cottage, bearing this time two flaming torches, with which he presented us, with a warning to be careful that none of the burning tar should fall upon our dresses.

"Don't you feel as though you were going to a funeral?" Ada asked, walking solemnly after the guide, her torch in one hand and the trailing smock in the other. I certainly did not feel particularly lively. Being the elder, I was burdened with a sense of responsibility; and I could not but think we were doing a risky thing, descending into the bowels of the earth with a man of whom we knew nothing, except that he possessed a kitten. However, I consoled myself with the thought that in a few minutes we should be in the heart of the mine, among all the other workmen, and that in this case, as in many others, there would be safety in numbers.

The passage into which we entered was low and dark, with just room enough for one person to walk along at a time. We had to go very slowly, as the ground was three or four inches deep in water, and it was necessary to balance one's self on the rough planks which ran down the middle, stooping at the same time to avoid bumping one's head against the slimy ceiling above. For the first ten minutes I went gaily on, trying to think that I was enjoying myself; but after slipping into the water for the sixth time, and bumping my head violently in regaining my equilibrium, I began to find the illusion very difficult. "How much further," I asked, "shall we have to go before reaching the mine?"

"In three quarters of an hour we shall be there, if you come along quickly."

"Three quarters of an hour! Why, I thought the whole thing would only take us ten minutes," I said in dismay.

"You will be for two hours in the mine, at least," the man replied; "and a good deal longer if you don't come quickly."

There was a threatening tone in his voice that I did not like, and turning to Ada, I implored her to come back while there was yet time. "I dare not propose it," she answered in English. "Think how wild he would be at having lost so much time! I only hope this is the mine, and not some horrible lonely place, known only to himself, into which he is taking us."

In spite of the oppressive heat of the place, I felt a cold shudder run through me, at hearing my own fears thus put into words. As though knowing by intuition that we were thinking of turning back, the man pushed on more quickly. I was at my wits' end. "Are there many men working in the mine at present?" I asked, desperately clinging to my last hope.

"There are none."

The words seemed to petrify me for a moment, then with the courage of despair, I said: "We will go back then. We only came to see how the mine was worked, and if the men are not here we will come again; it is useless to go further."

"I will set the machinery working," the guide said with a determined air. "The men are not at all necessary."

Resistance was useless. We had now come at least half a mile; all signs of daylight had long ago disappeared; if the man meant badly by us, we were just as much at his mercy here as we should be further on. So

with a sort of desperate fascination, we walked on, the air getting heavier and more difficult to breathe every moment.

"Do you ever have explosions here?" I asked, to break the horrid silence which had settled down upon us after my last vain endeavour to assert myself.

The guide turned round, and with a leer pointed to his disfigured face. "An explosion six years ago," he said; "before then I was considered handsome." This was added with such a fiendish grin that I decided we had better keep clear of personalities, and hastened to ask what had caused the explosion. "The mine was not properly ventilated, and the gas ignited," he explained. "But since then a great many improvements have been made, and there is no longer any fear of an accident. The air is very good now."

I was glad he found it so. For my part, I should have thought another explosion was just about due; but I suppose our ideas of good ventilation and a miner's are necessarily somewhat different.

We had now come to a place intersected with pipes, which carried the briny fluid from the mine down to the works at Bex. The guide called a halt, and holding up his torch pointed to a little stone cistern filled with yellowish-looking liquid. "Taste it," he said, dipping a very black finger into the beverage and conveying it to his mouth. Afraid of disobeying, I followed his example, but only made a pretence of tasting the horrid stuff.

"Very salt indeed," was my verdict; a safe one, I thought, in the circumstances.

"It's not salt at all," the man replied angrily. "The salt water is at the other side; this is a sweet liquid which comes from the same mine."

Feeling rather small, I followed him

to another cistern at the other side, and was forced this time to make a real trial of its contents, which were decidedly briny. "I will take your word for it," Ada said, when I tried to persuade her to prove for herself that there was now no doubt about our really being in the salt-mine.

For half an hour more we trudged on, our feet wringing wet, our backs aching, our throats filled with sulphur; but everything has an end, and at last, as we were on the very verge of collapsing in tears, the tunnel suddenly merged into a tremendous sort of cavern. Anything less like a fairy grotto could scarcely be imagined; but at any rate we could stand upright on firm ground, and that was always something to be thankful for. The guide meanwhile ran round, throwing the light of his torch on various ghastly-looking appliances, which stood in different parts of the cave, silent and motionless.

"It reminds me of the torturing chambers of the Spanish Inquisitors," Ada said; but the smile froze on her lips as our guide unexpectedly set in motion a tremendous machine just behind her, which groaned and rumbled and threw out its long black arms in every direction.

"You wanted to see the working of the mine, didn't you?" the man asked, with one of his fiendish grins; and off he went, pulling out a screw here, turning a handle there, till the whole place seemed one moving mass of machinery. I darted about like a mad creature, trying to get as far away from the roaring monsters as possible, and unable to ask a single question about the use of all these huge levers and enormous wheels. To me they seemed almost human, and I never thought of connecting them with the pretty little salt-cellar which is handed round so thoughtlessly at table.

"I'm sure the man is a lunatic," Ada said. "Just look what a diabolical delight he takes in playing with those things. I hope to goodness he understands them, and won't be caught up and killed before our eyes."

There were contingencies that I feared more than that; but I held my peace, and waited patiently till the man, returning, asked us how we liked the machinery.

"It is very nice, but would you mind stopping it?" I cried at the top of my voice.

With a shrug at the inconsistency of the sex, he did as he was told, silencing each of the noisy monsters with a sorrowful look as though they had been dear friends whose voices he loved to hear.

"Now we can go back," I said to Ada, and suiting the action to the word, was turning towards the tunnel, when a grimy hand was laid upon my shoulder.

"We have not finished yet," the guide said. "You must come down here;" and unfastening a sort of trapdoor, he disappeared from view down a rough ladder which led—goodness knows where! Afraid to refuse, I followed, and Ada came tumbling down almost on the top of me; as she said, a minute alone with the black monsters above would finish her. We landed in another cave exactly similar to the one we had left, but without the machinery; why we had been brought there I could not understand, for there was nothing very interesting to see.

"Wait here," the man said, pointing to a stone upon which we meekly sat down, and watched him clamber up the rocks, looking round for something that was evidently hidden up there. At last he found it,—a heavy stone hammer! Hugging it close to him, and with the torch in his other hand, he carefully picked his way

down, and went off with it to the other end of the cave, where we heard him hammering away at some hard substance.

"Keeps coffins in here perhaps," Ada said, with a shudder; then getting up quickly, she whispered: "Suppose we bolt while he is away; we could get a good start now." But I had not a bolt left in me; my feelings seemed quite numbed, and I could only wonder vaguely whether it would be nicer to be murdered outright, or to be left here to die a lingering death from starvation.

By this time the knocking had ceased, and I felt rather ashamed of my misgivings, when the suspected murderer returned laden with lovely pieces of pure white crystal, with which he told us to fill our pockets. "Lick one of them," he said; and glad to be let off so easily, I nearly choked myself in a desperate attempt to appear amiable.

There was another trap-door leading into a yet lower cavern. "Will you come down?" he said, pointing to it.

"No, thank you; I think we would like to go back now." I should also have liked to see the stone hammer replaced in its rocky bed, but I did not dare to say so.

"Very well, miss; then we must go up again."

We needed no second bidding. Up the ladder we scrambled, and upon looking at my watch I found we had been in the mine exactly an hour and a half.

"There are two modes of exit," our guide told us. "You can either go back the way we came, or you can come up the steps, which will let you out at the top entrance, about a mile farther up than the one we came in at."

"How long does it take to get out by the higher way?" I asked.

"About twenty minutes; there are eight hundred steps."

"A sort of treadmill," said Ada. "But I vote we go; anything would be better than that dreadful passage." I was not sure that there would be much to choose between them; for the staircase, hewn out of the rock, did not look inviting. However, we should save twenty minutes by going that way, so we might as well try it.

"You had better pin your dresses up," the man said; "the steps are apt to be wet."

Wet was no word for it! There was a dirty pool of black mud on each of them; the passage was so narrow that the walls touched us on either side, and the ceiling seemed to weigh upon our heads. Still during the first ten minutes or so we got on pretty well; for my part, I was so glad to get out of the mine, that I did not care how we did it. All I thought of was that each step was taking us nearer to the daylight, and I did not mind how steep or how muddy they were; but when we were about half way up, a dreadful feeling of suffocation came over me. Suddenly I felt as though I could not draw another breath; everything seemed to press upon me,—the walls, the ceiling, all were so close and damp. Looking down, one saw nothing but a yawning abyss, and above, the ghastly guide mounting up and up, his flaming torch in dreadful proximity to my sister's curly hair. Suppose one of us should take fire in this horrible place! This thought, flashing through my mind already unhinged by all we had gone through, quite finished me. My knees began to tremble; a black star-studded mist came before my eyes; and I had just time to hand my torch to Ada, when I sank down half unconscious upon the stone steps. There was no room for Ada to pass, and she was terrified lest I should faint outright, and slip down into the dark vault below. "Try to keep hold of the handrail," she im-



plored, holding me up as best she could. I made a desperate attempt to fight against the drowsiness that was fast stealing over me. "If only I could get a breath of air I should be all right," I gasped. The man told Ada that if I could manage to climb a few dozen more steps, we should come to a ventilator in the roof. How I managed it I cannot tell, but somehow or other I did; and oh, the luxury of the sweet fresh breeze that came down to meet us as we neared that blessed ventilator.

"You had better sit here, and take in a good supply of air for the rest of the journey," Ada said, planting me right under the grating. She, poor girl, looked very pale and frightened by this time, and I thought we had better push on while we were both of us fairly able to do so. After what seemed like an eternity, but must in reality have been about five minutes, we came to the end of the steps, and found ourselves in a passage similar to the one by which we had entered, only broader, so that we were able to help each other along.

We were destined to one more fright before getting fairly quit of the mine, and that was when, about half way down the passage, we heard approaching steps, and saw the flicker of a light in the distance. In another moment a second man appeared, scarcely less villainous looking than our guide to our heated imaginations. "What a time you have been!" he grumbled, as he took the latter aside, and they stood whispering together, with occasional glances in our direction.

"Of course, this is an accomplice," Ada said. "I see now why the man was so anxious for us to come the high

way! He had appointed to meet his friend here, and debate what should be done with us."

I tried to catch something of their conversation. "*Anglaises . . . toutes seules . . . courageuses*—" was all I could gather. Anything less courageous than we looked, two poor trembling creatures huddled together against the wall, could hardly be imagined! I almost screamed when the consultation being at an end, the second villain advanced towards us, but, with a look of curiosity and a bow, he passed on, and we were allowed to resume our walk. Five minutes more, and we were out on the mountain-path again in the blessed sunlight.

"I could hug that sweet man," Ada said, looking towards the guide, "for not having killed us. I know I have suffered at least a dozen different sorts of deaths in the last two hours at his hands."

Ada looked scarcely more huggable than the guide; her face as black as a sweep's, her smock filthy, and her boots a sight to dream of. However, five minutes at the pump in the miner's house made us look more presentable; and when his wife appeared with a blacking-brush, we felt that we should once more be able to face our poor old chaperon. To this day she tells people that a salt-mine is a most delightful place to visit. Two young friends of hers went all over one last winter, and although they said very little about it, she could tell from the lovely crystals they brought back with them what a charming place it must have been; in fact, she had regretted ever since that she had not gone with them.

We listen and smile; but we say nothing.

## THE SONGS OF PIEDIGROTTA.

WE stood on the balcony of a villa on the brow of the hill which, at the west end of Naples, forms a tolerably acute angle with the long promontory of Posilipo, enclosing all the curve of Mergellina and its port, and the church, square, and grotto of Piedigrotta, where, each year, takes place the great festival.

As we stood there, at three o'clock in the morning of the 8th of September, with the moon riding high in a sky half veiled with a slight haze, and a perfect calm in the atmosphere, there came up from far below, where an illuminated space showed among the houses on the sea-shore, a noise, colossal, imposing, more multitudinous than the roar of angry waves on a rocky coast. And this noise arose almost entirely from human throats, for what was not the human voice itself was the innumerable blowing of breath through trumpets and whistles of all descriptions and sizes, in all varieties of unmelodious notes, mixed rarely with the blast of wind-instruments belonging to bands of music, the drums of which hardly counted. We heard in fact the "voice of the people" wafted up, from sunset to dawn, and raised, not in acclamation of some public event, not in protest against some crying wrong, but purely for its own inane but good-humoured pleasure ; a pleasure derived from being, this people, for at least one whole night, masters of the city. The immense tumult, a veritable pandemonium, gave one a strange sense of what a power the people is ; of how irresistible would be its might, if ever with one voice it determined, for good or evil, to accomplish some mighty deed.

Some four hundred years ago this celebrated festival of Piedigrotta was already an old-established custom at Naples. A century and a half ago it became a state holiday, and was celebrated by king and people with the utmost civil and military pomp. Now it is no longer accompanied by royal processions and a grand display of military. The people is king ; and for twenty-four hours the inhabitants of Naples and the neighbourhood pour through all the streets and through the public gardens on their way to the church of Piedigrotta, which, with the street leading to it, is splendidly illuminated for the occasion. In fantastic *cortèges*, in family groups, in bands of ragged boys or singly, the populace explode bombs, whistle, drink, feast, dance, and above all sing the songs of Piedigrotta.

Formerly these songs arose among the people themselves, some inspired by medieval legends, but most pure love-songs, gay or sad, to which some untutored musician set a tune, or which were transformed into master-pieces by such geniuses as Bellini and Rossini, and became the delight not only of Naples, but of the civilised world. Now many of the songs arise in other ways. Many are still the original work of the unskilled people, but others aim higher, and really gifted poets and musicians write and compose for Piedigrotta. And when these superior creations chance to touch the heart and ear of the people, they are at once adopted, and are sung all over the city by rich and poor alike.

Formerly the original songs were sung by the populace on the eve of Piedigrotta by the people to the blowing of a reed-pipe, or common

whistle, and to the rhythmic beat of a tambourine, or to the noise produced by the friction of a stick drawn through a hole in a piece of parchment stretched over the top of a pan. Now the mandoline and guitar furnish a more artistic accompaniment, or good orchestras in concert-halls and theatres execute the instrumental part of the same songs. Certain it is that the poetry which lies deep in the heart of the passionate Neapolitan people has progressed into more elegant and perfect embodiment. Neapolitan song has received the seal of masters of composition, and become elevated to an art; and, though less spontaneous, it satisfies the needs of the most naturally musical inhabitants of the Italian peninsula.

Popular songs in Naples are, for the most part, sentimental. The Romans have the satiric song, the Venetians the sensual serenade; but the Neapolitan song, grave or gay, is essentially full of feeling and sentiment, simple in tone, and generally void of anything that can offend good taste; it is also vivacious above all others.

Much of this quality is owing to the vivid imagination of the Neapolitans, and much again to their soft and fresh dialect. Love-phrases addressed to the beloved one are the usual contents. If she be kind, she is compared to the most beautiful natural objects; if she be cruel, she is stormed with pictures of the lover's misery. In an indirect sort of way the beauty of his native place is described in the songs, and should a Neapolitan exile hear one of them when far away in exile, he is seized with home-sickness; while even a stranger, to whom is recalled the Neapolitan melody he has heard sung in the streets under the magical southern moonlight, forgets the squalor of the neglected southern city, and would fain be there again.

Ugly and grotesque as the Neapolitan dialect seems when spoken, it caresses the ear when sung. It lends itself in a wondrous way to music, and is capable of expressing the most varied emotions,—cruel, gay, sarcastic sentimental, or passionate. Of late years, on the approach of the feast of Piedigrotta, prizes have been offered for the best songs, and cultured poets and musicians are not ashamed to compete. Hundreds of songs are thus offered for selection; and when the committee for the prizes have pronounced the first judgment, it is confirmed or annulled by the verdict of the people, who adopt or reject those that have come successfully out of the struggle.

As a specimen of what has been produced this year, we may give a rough, unrhymed version of one of the most characteristic, so far as the words go, which has been set to music by the well-known composer Valente. But it is the poem that takes our fancy, the music, to our taste, being rather too scientific, with much imitation of Verdi's latest manner.

#### THE MAGIC SHIRT.

##### I.

What thread art thou spinning, Carmela?  
For whom thy distaff dost empty?  
For whom dost thou weave the delicate  
stuff

Which daily becomes more fine?

And, weaving, Carmela replies:

"I am weaving a magical shirt,  
And the man who wears it no weapon  
Shall have the power to wound."

And she twirls and she spins and she  
weaves,

And empties the gyrating bobbin,—  
A silky skein on her distaff,  
And in her eyes the tears;  
And all alone she sings,

The poor, poor child:

"Why do I fear? Why, as I weave,  
Do I feel so sad at heart?  
Poor girl that I am! They call me fair,  
But they know not what 'tis to be fair  
and sad!"

## II.

Youths ! leave your native soil  
Which you dig in the sweat of your brow !  
By our king we are called to the war  
'Gainst a king who would make us slaves !  
Thou hidest the magical shirt, Carmela ;  
See'st thou not that the moment is come ?

Why keep it so jealously hidden,  
When thy brother doth need it, Carmela ?  
But she twirls and she spins and she weaves,

And empties the gyrating bobbin,  
Aye the silky skein on her distaff,  
Aye the sad tears in her eyes ;  
And all alone she sings,

The poor, poor child :  
" Why do I fear ? Why, as I weave,  
Do I feel so sad at heart ?  
Let them leave their home ! Go, brother,  
to war !  
Who knows ? Wilt thou conquer, re-  
turn ? "

## III.

Alas ! a sweetheart she had,  
Both handsome and wicked was he !  
He knew where the garment was hid,  
And he went and stole it by night.  
To his native land he was traitor,  
And fought on the enemy's side.  
In the enemy's ranks he enlisted,

Far worse than the enemy he !—  
And Carmela spins and she weaves,  
And empties the gyrating bobbin ;  
Aye the silky skein on the distaff,  
Aye the bitter tears in her eyes ;  
And all alone she sings,

The poor, poor child :  
" They spin and they weave ; they sing  
and they weep,  
And every day 'tis the same.  
My sweetheart has slain my brother,  
And this is the song I sing—all alone ! "

Another song, which has already  
gained a favourable verdict, is pure  
Neapolitan in spirit, and gives a pic-  
ture of an everyday street-scene.  
The refrain is catching, and will soon  
be heard all over the city.

## WHEN THE REGIMENT IS PASSING.

## I.

When the regiment is passing  
Swiftly runs sweet Rosinella !  
By the captain, by the sergeant  
Will she now be seen, or not ?  
How she blushes ! how she bridles !

How she beats time ! how she's smiling !  
And for whom is it all meant ?

Is it the colonel ? Is it the captain ?

Sword in hand,

They gaily pass !

Was it the corporal ? Was it the sergeant ?

No one knows !

What's to be done ?

## II.

When the *réveille* has sounded  
Who so prompt as Rosinella ?  
Gaily dressed, and *chic* and dainty,  
Laughs and looks, enchants them all !  
Says the lieutenant, " Oh Cara ! "

Then she smiles and waves her hand.

With a grin the sergeant greets her,

And she laughs and signs " Oh no ! "

Is it the colonel ? Is it the captain ?

Sword in hand,

Let them pass !

Was it the corporal ? Was it the bugler ?

No one knows !

What's to be done ?

## III.

When the sharp tattoo is sounding,  
First of all to come is Rosa ;  
Presses 'mong the valiant drummers,  
Listening to their rat-ta-tat !

Back they push her ; for the general

Prances up all red and angry,

Fuming like a very wild beast !

Some one, sure, will be arrested !

Is it—the colonel ? Is it—the captain ?

Musket in hand,

The ranks all stare !

But 'tis nothing !

What should they do ?

The songs offered for competition  
this year consist of many love-songs,  
a song in regret for the vanishing of  
the picturesque old harbour of Santa  
Lucia, and hosts of others, which  
will live or die according as the people  
adopt them or not.

Signor de Giacomo, many of whose  
original verses have been set to music  
on the present occasion, has lately  
studied the origin of an old Piedigrotta  
song, one of the saddest and sweetest,  
the melody of which, once heard,  
haunts the memory for ever. And  
this is the legend of that song :  
" *Fenesta che lucive.* "

In a wide valley bathed by many

rivulets descending from the neighbouring mountains, lies a little town called Carini, about twenty miles from Palermo. There, in the sixteenth century, lived a certain Baron Vincenzo the Second of Talamanca, who had taken to wife one Laura Lanzi, by whom he had eight children. One of these, Caterina, for what reason is not known, was left behind to inhabit the ancient castle of Carini, which had been built by Manfred, and the great hall of which still contained that hero's collection of arms. Her parents, with the rest of the family, had retired to the city of Palermo. At Carini there then existed a large feudal estate belonging to the Vernagalli, one of the seven Pisan families which had settled in Sicily in 1400. The third son of this family, Vincenzo, fell in love with the lonely and lovely Caterina, and she with him. Caterina, as her portrait shows, was a tall graceful girl with fair hair and melancholy eyes, about eighteen years of age. Her dress is represented as a long white flowing garment with hanging sleeves, and girdled by a rich belt. Caterina and Vincenzo had loved each other and enjoyed the happiness of their mutual affection for ten months, when a monk, who had discovered their secret, travelled to Palermo and betrayed it to Caterina's father. The old ballad which tells the tale relates how the baron had just returned from hunting when the monk arrived, and, after spending the night in conference with him, set forth at dawn for Carini. Caterina, from her balcony, observed her father's approach, and called out, "My lord father, what brings you here?" "I am come to kill you," replied the father, without hesitation. When he entered the castle there ensued a horrible pursuit. Caterina, crying for help, ran desperately through the halls and corridors. Her father

overtook her near a small door, over which hung and still hangs the family coat of arms. Then he stabbed her twice, in the back and through the heart. Caterina, as she slipped down against the wall, left upon it the print of her bloody hand, which her father had neither the means nor the courage ever to remove. Many years afterwards he caused the door between the room where he had butchered his child, and his own, to be walled up, and a new door was opened, upon the marble of which was inscribed the words, *Et nova sint omnia*, which may still be read.

No one knows who wrote the ballad. It is a beautiful and curious lyric, with descriptive particulars that could only be known to some one who was acquainted with the castle, the family, and the monk who plays such an odious part. It is suspected to be the work of a poet of the sixteenth century who wrote in the Sicilian dialect, Matteo di Ganci, some of whose writings are still to be found in the archives of the family of Carini. From this old ballad was taken the fragment that later on provided the subject of *Fenesta che lucive*. Mariano Paoletta translated the words into the Neapolitan dialect ages ago, and it is the lover, Vincenzo Vernagallo, who speaks in it. But when Paoletta published his version for the first time, the Neapolitan people had long since known and sung the legend to its sad and sweet melody. How the words and music had found their way to Italy is not known. What is sure is that the fragment of the legend had been adopted and sung by ten or twenty southern provinces, each small village and hamlet possessing its own peculiar version in its own peculiar dialect.

Salamon Marini, on hearing it, exclaimed that it would become immortal in the hands of a Bellini.



And in fact, the melody, as known in Naples, has often been attributed to Bellini. In it there is a phrase that resembles the funeral air in the *SONNAMBULA*, and indeed another that resembles the prayer in Rossini's *Mosé*. Were these two masters inspired by the Sicilian air, or did they give origin to the melody now so well known? The literary composition of the poem goes back to the sixteenth century, but the musical composition cannot be traced further back than to the beginning of our era.

The still living Neapolitan composer, Cottrau, it is said, took the air from Signor Ricci, rearranged it and published it as his own in the first half of the present century. Both Ricci and Cottrau evidently derived it either from the Swan of Pesaro or the Swan of Catania. The people, little caring whence it came, adopted it as their own, for it spoke to their hearts with the passion and realism so native to the race.

The fragment of the legend from which were taken the verses afterwards re-written in the Neapolitan dialect, is the lament of the lover for the loss of his sweetheart. Roughly translated, they run as follows :

Closed, closed is the casement of my love,  
The casement where my goddess once ap-  
peared,  
She comes no more ; no more she comes  
to me ;  
So surely she is lying ill upon her  
couch !—  
Her mother shows herself and says, "Thy  
love,  
Thy beauty, whom thou seek'st, is in her  
grave !"  
The sepulchre has taken her ! Oh, gloomy  
tomb !  
As thou hast taken her, take also me !

I wander in the night like to the moon ;  
I wander seeking, seeking for my love,  
And on the way I met with horrid Death,  
Empty of eyes, and void of rosy lips,  
And Death thus spake : "Where goest  
thou, fair youth ?"

"I seek for her who lovèd me so dearly ;  
I go in quest of my belovèd one !"  
"Then seek for her no more, for in the  
grave she lies.

"And if, fair youth, thou disbelievest me,  
Go to the graveyard and to the Beata,  
Put off the coffin-lid, and look within ;  
There thou wilt find thy love devoured by  
worms ;  
There the rats feed upon her fairest flesh,  
Upon the throat once circled by gold  
chain ;  
The rats do feed upon her snowy hands,  
Unequalled in their beauty and their  
hue !"

I went to find the church's sacristan,  
And bid him open me the closed doors.  
"Oh God, wilt thou not give to me the  
keys !  
With my own hands I'll break the portals  
wide."  
And when the priest appears, I tell to  
him  
All the long story of my gloomy fate ;  
And how I'd make my goddess live again ;  
She who, indeed, doth rest among the  
dead !

Oh, evil fate ! how hard thou art to me,  
Forbidding me to see my one beloved !  
"Oh sacristan, kindle full many a torch,  
Take care, dear sacristan, of my dear love,  
Let not the lights be spent ; keep them  
alight !  
For she did ever fear to sleep alone !"  
But now dread Death doth keep her com-  
pany !

While we listen to the modern  
songs competing for the prize,  
we feel that none can possibly be  
more beautiful than the old and  
deeply sad "window that shone and  
shines no more !"

## RAMBLES OF A NATURALIST IN WOOLMER FOREST.

THE reality of the grievance felt by the common people of England in the constant extension of the forests by the Norman and Angevin kings is sometimes questioned. The exaggeration of the tales of cruelty inflicted in the creation of the New Forest will partly account for this historic doubt. But if the terms of the Charter of the Forests, wrung from Henry the Third, are not sufficient evidence of the injury caused by the progressive annexation of large areas of land devoted exclusively to the enjoyment of the sovereign, as a "single and mighty Nimrod," the number and extent of the forests which still remain, some only as forest in name, others with partial survivals of forest-law, may be cited as showing the greed of the early foreign kings of England for this princely form of land-grabbing.

Many of these forests are almost unknown to the general public. They are not important from their size, or remembered for any violence which marked their appropriation. They are not magnificent enough to claim a place, under the stately definition of a royal forest, as a "territory privileged for wild beast and fowls of forest, chase, and warren to abide in, in the safe protection of the king for his princely delight and pleasure"; neither were they large enough to form a safe harbour for outlaws, which made it a matter of policy to place certain wild districts under the arbitrary control of the sovereign. But the early kings seem to have marked any district, however small, not actually under cultivation, for their peculiar use, and to have turned them into forest by

a stroke of the pen. In the south, not only such places as the forests of Wychwood, Hainault, Epping, Whittlewood, and Ashdown, were annexed, but much smaller and less valuable spots. Attached to the present management of the New Forest, for instance, are a constellation of satellites extending from Parkhurst Forest in the Isle of Wight, with Bere Forest and Alice Holt, to Woolmer Forest on the borders of Hampshire within forty miles of London.

Woolmer Forest occupies a middle place between the varied and magnificent wilderness of the New Forest, and the present condition of Alice Holt, which was early converted into a great oak wood for growing timber for the Navy. In no great area Woolmer contains scenery singularly wild and broken, and the two thousand acres enclosed by the Crown are supplemented by a wilderness of heather, bog, pools, and steep rough hills, set in the centre of some of the most fertile, and also some of the most barren and wild country of the south. It is separated from the Hindhead Heath by the beautiful strip of country running from Haslemere, through Bramshott, Liphook, and Headly to Bentley. To the south it is bounded by the Meeon valley, and its northern side lies in the parish of Selborne, not many miles from the "malm" valleys and chalk hills of that wooded and fertile village. Gilbert White says much of Woolmer Forest. It was the wildest country he knew: "A tract of land about seven miles in length by two and a half in breadth, abounding with many curious productions both animal and vegetable."

"This lovely domain," he continues, "is a very agreeable haunt for many sorts of wildfowls which not only frequent it in the winter, but breed there in the summer, such as lapwings, snipes, and wild duck, and, as I have discovered within these few years, teals."

The blackgame had disappeared in White's time, though they have since been re-introduced; and the five hundred head of red deer had been removed on account of the demoralisation which the tradition of deer-stealing caused in the neighbourhood. The old race of deer-stealers was hardly yet extinct, and used to recall over their ale the exploits of their youth, such as watching a pregnant hind to her lair, and, when the calf was dropped, paring its feet with a pen-knife to the quick to prevent its escape till it was large and fat enough to be killed; and shooting one of their neighbours with a bullet in a turnip-field by moonlight, mistaking him for a deer. Such men may even now be found in the New Forest survivors of the days before the Deer Removal Act in 1849, who used in their youth to indulge their tastes for this attractive form of poaching, and have never settled quietly down to the purely agricultural life since, but pick up a living, no one quite knows how, on the skirts of the forest.

First impressions of a new country are always vivid and delightful, if the district is worth visiting at all. Our first impression of Woolmer Forest promised so much that, though realised later, we could hardly believe that we had so quickly found what we had rather hoped than expected to discover. We knew that it was a thoroughly wild district, though so near to London; and that it had once been a noted haunt of rare birds we had Gilbert

White's authority. But whether the forest was anything more than an almost treeless waste, as in White's days, or whether it were beautiful as well as wild and little inhabited, was left for actual experience to discover. We were not long in doubt. The drive from Liphook Station on the South-Western Railway is only some three and a half miles, and the road to the house, in which we had secured quarters, ran beneath a steep, heather-covered ridge ending in the high peak of Walldon Hill. On the left was the lower broken ground of the forest, covered with thick plantations of fir, larch, and oak, mixed with heather and bog, and in parts, as we soon perceived, studded with shining pools. It was clearly still a paradise for birds; on almost every field or strip of moorland by the road the lapwings were running and rising, while the laugh of the woodpeckers, the call of the cuckoo, and the cooing of the ring-doves rang out from the woods below.

We at once stepped out into the margin of the forest to gain an idea of the country, and, if possible, to make friends with some of the natives. Woodland countries are the best homes for poor men. They gain much from the cheap supply of fuel, from the rabbits and fish, which in spite of prohibitions always find their way to the cottage, from the wild fruits and plants, the berries of the forest, and the cresses of the streams; and their work in the woods is better paid and more interesting than that of the field labourer. Add to this that at Woolmer the forester's cottage is often his own, gained by encroachment on the forest in days gone by; that he has frequently rights of common, and runs two or three active little cows in the forest; and you have a very pleasant specimen of the happy rural Englishman.

We soon discovered two or three foresters' homes, neat, low, red-tiled cottages scattered near a stream on some sound ground apparently reclaimed from a marsh. They had good gardens with plenty of wall-flowers and primroses in bloom. The men had just returned from their work of timber-logging in the woods; and the sitting-rooms were pervaded with a fine fresh odour of burning fir-cones, hot cake, and tea. We discussed the possibilities of finding rare nests in the forest, and were surprised to find how well-informed the men were as to the birds breeding in the district. Probably this is a survival of the days when the shooting and wild-fowling of the forest were more considered than at present.

As we were taking leave of the friendly woodman, a small boy, who had been listening, volunteered the remark that he knew of a snipe's nest close by, and led the way with his hands in his pockets, to a little wet hollow full of pale water-grass. From this, to our great surprise, two snipes rose at our feet, and we found the nest, a neat hollow in the grass, but without eggs. These, the urchin then informed us, he had broken the day before, because the bird had been sitting for some days and they were no good to eat. He apparently ascribed our disappointment to the fact that we had also wanted to eat them, for he presently ran after us down the road, and overtaking us, presented a small trout "for thee teas," as he remarked. We found he had caught the trout on a night-line baited with a worm. We did eat it (though not for "our teas"), and it was excellent, like a Scotch burn trout.

A snipe's nest and a poached trout in the first hour of our stay were an earnest of something very fresh and delightful on the morrow. Our temporary host was the chief warder of

the forest, who had built for himself a good brick house on the side of Wall-don Hill, roomy and commodious. He gave us entertainment and information; and it was arranged that next day we should accompany an under-warder, an old native of the forest, on his rounds.

The view across the forest at day-break was far more beautiful than we had anticipated. Wakened by the cuckoos which were shouting their call in the apple-trees under our windows, we saw below and beyond us miles of forest, partly woodland, partly heath. Rows of dark pines and feathery larches rose rank behind rank in the low ground, with clinging vapours floating across their lines, where the woods hid the swamps and marshes. Here and there rose brown, heather-crested hillocks, beyond which were wide heaths, and beyond all the lofty, purple ridge of Weavers' Down which closes the view across the forest southwards. To the right was the barren hill of Black Moor, and beyond that, some miles distant, the beech-crowned heights of Selborne and Hawkley Hanger. Our main object of the day was to discover if the nests of the wild fowl, which Gilbert White said bred in the forest, were still to be found there. The old warder who was to accompany us had no doubt on the subject, and offered to show us a teal's nest within five minutes' walk of the house. We struck at once into a rough track leading to the low ground, with thick fir woods on our right, through heather which grew deeper as we descended the slope, dotted with self-sown firs. The whole air was fragrant with the scent of pine and heather, and of dew-drenched moss and lichens drying in the bright May-day sun; snakes rustled off among the drying grasses, and the grasshoppers were already beginning their summer song. Not a hundred yards down the track the warder

stopped and pointed to a miniature fir no larger than those which are sold for Christmas trees in the London shops, saying that the teal was sitting on her nest under the tree the evening before. We approached cautiously and peered into the heather. But there was no need of care. The little duck had hatched her brood that morning and had led them away down to the marsh. One addled egg and the shells of the others remained in the nest, which was very carefully made of moss and little tufts of down from the bird's breast. Had we paid our visit an hour earlier we might have surprised the whole family on their way to the marsh. The instinct with which wild ducks make for the water is very curious. We once had the fortune to surprise a family of young wild ducks endeavouring to reach the Round Pond by way of Kensington High Street. They were hatched somewhere in the grounds of Holland House; and though the old duck remained inside the railings in great anxiety, the ducklings were resolutely trotting down Holland Walk in the direction of the main road, until some of the gardeners were called, who caught the brood and transferred them to a basket. Beyond the teal's nest, hardly screened by a low plantation of seedling firs, lay a marsh; not a stretch of land lying in soak, a sponge of mosses and peat, such as the New Forest bogs, nor yet a swamp, such as rivers and brooks make when the course is partly choked and the slow stream winds through mud banks and alders with uncertain outlets, but a true stagnant marsh of standing waters, black and deep, but fringed, dotted, and divided by walls and lines of marsh plants. In the centre were upright masses of bright green reeds and rushes, with bays and inlets into which the marsh fowl swam as we approached. Clumps of

dwarf alder, hoary with lichen, grew straight out of the water, and here and there white limbs of drowned trees. From its margin came the croaking of thousands of frogs, an unusual sound to English ears; and everywhere among the rushes we caught glimpses of wild duck, teal, and water-hens. Several duck rose and flew round the marsh, but the greater number swam with their broods into the thick cover of the reeds.

In the early autumn as many as two hundred duck are sometimes found in this marsh. Anciently it was a lake and is still known as Hogmere, being named with the two other pools Cranmere, Wolmere, after the three creatures anciently common in the forest, the wild boar, the wolf, and the crane or heron. The herons breed there still, and we left the marsh to visit their ancient haunts near the Stags' Wood and the Deer Hut at the south-eastern corner of the forest. On our way we searched a rough hill-side for a wild duck's nest. Looking for a wild duck's nest in acres of heather and seedling firs seems rather a hopeless task; but we discovered one in less than twenty minutes. A single feather gave the clue, and after diligent search the nest was found, placed like the teal's under a dwarf fir. Large plantations lie to the south between Hogmere marsh and the heronry. The fir-trees are full of squirrels' nests; so numerous are they that almost every fifth tree seems to hold one. The warder, in order to save the pheasants on his beat, shot five hundred squirrels in one winter as food for the foxes. Beyond the firs lie some woods of oaks, much mixed with holly, which is indigenous to all the better soil of the neighbourhood. These woods were planted by Cobbett's enemy "the smooth Mr. Huskisson," who incurs a share of Cobbett's in-



vective for planting fir ; but it is clear that this was only done on soil which would grow nothing else, and in Woolmer, as in the New Forest, the fir sows itself and is increasing naturally. In the oak woods a little spaniel of the keeper disturbed a hen-pheasant from her nest. The bird at once began a series of astonishing jumps and flutterings, rising and falling over the bushes, and the spaniel at once followed in chase ; the old bird when she had decoyed the dog to a safe distance, rose, and flew round in a circle, pitching near to the nest. It held ten eggs, which the keeper decided to remove and place under a hen.

Besides the larger pools, Woolmer Pond, Hogmere and Hollywater, there are numbers of smaller ponds in the forest, often connected by little winding streams half choked with leaves and stained rust colour by iron ore. One of them, a narrow sheet of water some hundred yards long and forty broad, lay on our way to the heronry, and as it was studded with great bunches of common rush, we took off our boots and stockings to hunt for water-hens' nests. Almost every one of the big rush-crowns held either an old nest, a water-rat's seat, or a half-finished moorhen's or dabchick's nest. One only, a moorhen's, held eggs ; a clutch of nine, some of which we transferred to our collecting boxes.

Heronries are always set in picturesque spots, and usually in the largest and most ancient trees of the neighbourhood. Probably the tallest trees in England occupied by herons' nests are the beeches on Vinney Ridge in the New Forest, whose tops are so high that they are above the usual angle of sight even as the head is carried when searching tall trees. At Woolmer the herons build in the centre of a wood of very tall Scotch firs. The nests are not close together but

scattered in the wood, though each tree that bears one is in sight of one or two more ; they are made of huge piles of brambles and light dead sticks, and the trees occupied by the birds may generally be detected at some distance by the bright green appearance of the trunk, which is covered with dusty lichen, the result apparently of repeated dressings of fish-manure. After careful search we discovered ten nests, from each of which the hen bird slipped off, and then circled round far above with angry croaks, until the sky was full of the wide-winged drifting forms of the birds. As we remained quiet and did not disturb them, they came back one by one, and settled down to brood the young, the remains of the bright blue egg-shells under the trees showing us that every set of eggs had been hatched. These herons are a great ornament to the forest ; but are not looked upon with favour by the owners of the artificial trout-pools now so common round the mansions of Surrey and North Hampshire. They make nightly visits to the breeding-pools, and work terrible havoc among the young fish. A cormorant is said to devour fourteen pounds' weight of fish a day ; a heron can hardly live on less than half that quantity, and even the resources of the upper Wey, which under the name of the Deadwater forms a natural northern boundary to the Woolmer district, must suffer from their fishing. Beyond the heron's wood lies what in the New Forest would be termed a lawn, a triangle of smooth close turf dotted with holly bushes and juniper, opposite a very old inn called the Deer's Hut. Close by the house is a fine oak, the best in this part of the forest ; and behind it begins a stretch of more fertile land, which grows in richness till it becomes hop-garden near Liphook. Between the Deer's Hut and Walldon

Hill lies the wooded portion of the district. To the south the land is strangely wild, barren, and forbidding, rising by a gradual ascent to the great ridge of Weavers' Down, dark, treeless, and heathery, commanding a view over some of the finest hill country of the south, with the forest district at its feet. The hills of Selborne, Black Moor, Hindhead, Haslemere, Crooksbury, Blackdown, and the high chalk downs of the Meeon valley, are the main features in the circle.

From whatever point the Forest is seen the eye is attracted by a dark rounded clump of pines rising from a conical hill south-east of the main mass of woods. This is Holly Water Clump, a landmark in the district and a beautiful feature when visited and explored. The hill is a steep rounded cone, covered at the bottom with oak, and surmounted by a grove of immensely tall Scotch firs, which rise almost without a branch to a height of one hundred and fifty feet. This is a stronghold of all the robber birds of the Forest; every other tree seemed to hold an old crow's or hawk's nest; many were still occupied, and we could hear the faint cry of the young crows, young sparrow-hawks, and a brood of magpies, safe in the unclimbable trees, while the old birds soared and circled far above. Several of the trees had been struck by lightning, and where the bark had been stripped by the descending current, the tree had become unsound. These narrow strips had for generations been used by woodpeckers as places for their nests. Apparently a new hole was cut each year, for in some trees there were several, bored one above the other like stops in a flute. Under one, which was recently cut, we found the white shell of a woodpecker's egg which the squirrels had stolen and sucked that morning.

At the back of the mound, almost under the pines, nestles a pretty cottage on a terrace cut from the sandy slope. With its old tiled roof, its cherry and apple trees in full blossom, and the little lake below, it is a model of a rustic home. This lake is the completion of the beauties of Holly Water. It is a long deep pool, fringed on one side by oak woods, on the other by masses of ancient holly, which give it its name. From the pool runs a narrow swift stream, dammed in places by miniature sluices, to join the Deadwater a mile or so below. In places it is almost arched over by wild rose and woodbine; the banks are close turf set with daisies and embroidered with moss and primroses. It is the choice streamlet of the Forest, and in its short course vies in beauty with the New Forest brooks and the becks of the Surrey Hills. The holly brake is not part of the Forest though naturally it forms a large wild annex to its borders. It is part of Linfield Common, which with the commons of Passfield, Bramshott, Oakhanger and others are so wild and beautiful that it is difficult to say where the forest region ends. Linfield Common consists in great part of oak and holly, massed in picturesque clumps and glades like a miniature wood from the New Forest. The oaks and hollies alternate by the side of the road, the former making their branches meet above while the hollies stand like a green wall between the trunks. Woolmer Pond, except in size, does not compare favourably with the other pools in the Forest. It is a desolate sheet of water, lying on a bed of half-hardened sand impregnated with iron, into which the neighbouring slopes drain but without any outlet in the form of brook or marsh. It has not even the beauty of Sowley Pond on Beaulieu Heath in the New

Forest, which is deep, bright, and fringed with heather, though unshaded by trees and destitute of the delta of reeds and water-plants which make the head of any stream-fed pool interesting. Woolmer Pond is, in fact, a gigantic puddle, such as may be seen on most village greens. Its waters have shrunk and left a strip of sand and mud between the margin and the true bank. In winter wild-fowl still assemble there, but not in the numbers in which Gilbert White saw them. On the long hill north of the pond is Lord Selborne's fine house, and the village and church of Blackmoor. Beyond lies the road to Selborne, through scenery and soil very different from that of the Forest. The transition from heather and wilderness to rich loamy fields, hop-gardens, and ancient meadows, is not the least charm of a walk along this border of the Forest. The bird-life changes with the change of soil and plants. In place of pert whinchats and furzechats flirting their tails on the juniper-bushes and dwarf pines, the yellow-hammer and chaffinch fly along the lanes. The brook which runs down from the two ponds at Oakhanger is set with violets and primroses; water-wagtails and white-throats, thrushes, robins, and tits, all show that we are once more in the country of cornfields, hard-wood trees, comfort, and cultivation.

But that is a kind of scenery which can be enjoyed in most parts of rural England. The æsthetic value of the Forest is that for eight hundred years its surface has never been tormented by the plough, the harrow, or the scythe. It is almost uninhabited, and were it not for the War Office, to

whom it has for some years been leased by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, as an occasional manœuvring-ground for the troops from Aldershot and Winchester, it would have no roads either. Unfortunately straight military roads have been cut across it,—a great disfigurement to its wild appearance.

Now that by a curious irony these secluded forest areas, once seized by the Sovereign for his sole enjoyment, have passed into the keeping of the nation, the question arises whether it would not be well to imitate the Norman Kings, and keep them as reserves, secure from all building, inhabitation, and development for the perpetual enjoyment of the people. This has been done, in a great measure, in the case of the New Forest, where Parliament has, so far as it can, secured that the greater part shall remain for ever open and wild. But until Parliament says otherwise, there is no reason why the Woods and Forests Department should not, in the pecuniary interests of the public, lease Woolmer Forest for building or make a new Aldershot there. The former is not a remote contingency. The pine and heather country is rapidly becoming a mere appendage to villa gardens, and the red houses extend from Farnham across Hindhead to Haslemere, and are even now beginning to fringe the Forest. If the builder once gets a foot on the Forest proper, we may bid good-bye for ever to the wild district from which Gilbert White derived such entertainment and satisfaction both as a naturalist and as a sportsman, the still unspoiled royal Forest of Woolmer.

## A DOMESTIC DRAMA.

THE scene of this little drama is on the Breton coast, one of the wildest, most romantic, most varied, most perilous to be found anywhere in the world. To localise it more precisely, it is near the end of the small promontory terminated by the Point of the Raz, or Cape Raz. In front is the Bay of the Dead; the horizon is notched beyond the bay by a group of islands, mere rocks or reefs, the largest of which is the Isle of Sen; to the north-west is the Isle of Ouessant, the most western point of French territory. Brittany is famous for its "calvaries," its "pardons," its serving-maids, its fishermen, its poverty, and its beggars, the last adding to the picture a painfully discordant note. On every hand are seen fishing-villages, and hamlets making a pretence of agriculture, the names of nearly all commencing with *plo* or *plou*, of which Plogoff, Ploeven, Plogastel, Ploubenec, Plouescat, and Ploxeperet will serve as joyous specimens.

The Bretons do not scorn the consonants, as do the French in general, but give each its full value, so you can easily imagine that when a Breton speaks in earnest, as the Bretons usually do, it is difficult for the ocean howling among these rocks and caverns to drown his voice. All these villages, these bays, these inlets, cliffs, and islands, have their legends, some of which are really beautiful; and the French chroniclers and historical societies have collected them and put them into volumes that they may be preserved to posterity, and with the further laudable desire of attracting wealthy visitors, and thus

effecting a more equitable distribution of property. Artists come from afar to study the costumes and manners of the natives, for which they claim a remarkable local colour, and especially the fishermen and the sea in its peaceful or terrible moods. In summer the region is seldom without a liberal sprinkling of these vagrant searchers after the beautiful, whose presence is always welcome to the inhabitants, and who are generous according to their means. In fact as we glance across the landscape, we detect a gray blotch at the edge of that grove of stunted trees which is charitably attempting to soften the rugged aspect of the promontory of the Raz. We suspect it would, more closely scrutinised, resolve itself into human forms. Let us approach.

It is, in reality, a young man of apparently twenty-eight years, and a young woman seemingly of twenty-six, each in a costume sufficiently negligent to befit the artistic profession, and provided with the mechanical accessories essential to its practice. We cannot gratify the morbidly romantic reader by calling them handsome, but, not being averse to compromise, we can safely say that they are picturesque. It is a convenient term applying, in the language of the grammarians, both to persons and things. They blend harmoniously with their surroundings. He wears a gray suit that does not fit badly, and the not unbecoming cap of the Parisian students. Her dress is of a lighter shade than his, and fits fairly well. Her hat has not the form that the maidens of the Salvation Army have endeavoured to render fashionable,

but might be made to resemble it by slightly crushing the brim. She has thrown it aside for the moment, revealing a delicate profile, a clear complexion, and giving greater freedom to an abundance of soft brown hair. His hair is dark, and, though not short, does not fall upon his shoulders, as perhaps it should. Both have intelligent faces, and the appearance of not having been driven to art as a means of keeping the wolf from the door.

The writer confesses his inability to give them a more flattering aspect, and if his portraiture does not render them romantic he cannot help it. There is something peculiar in the position of their easels. He is so placed as to command a view of the waves gently breaking on the rocks a little further on ; she sits in the path two or three yards in advance of him, a trifle to the right. She is a landscape-painter, and is making a study of rocks and trees in an opening in the wood before her. She is scarcely out of his line of sight, and a slight obliquity of vision on his part enables him to fully command her profile. This profile, it is evident, greatly pleases him ; and it is therefore not surprising that on his canvas the edge of a rock takes a feminine semblance, and the flecks of sunshine on her hair are transferred to the angles of the hard stone.

HE (*after some minutes of silence, reading from a French guide-book, and improvising where his knowledge of the language is at fault*): "The Bay of the Dead is so called because of the shipwrecks that have occurred in it. These have been so numerous that the green depths of the sea may be truly said to be paved with human skeletons. Cape Raz is the terror of all the sailors along this coast, and no Breton fisherman ever passes it

without muttering this prayer : ' Oh, my God, help me in the passage of the Raz ; my bark is so little and the sea is so great ! ' Two hundred years ago the inhabitants were wreckers, who lived by plundering the vessels cast on these rocks. When the tempest was particularly violent they hastened to the shore. They attached lanterns to the horns of cows and oxen, which they fettered and drove here and there on the beach, thus deluding the storm-tossed mariners with the idea that the lights they saw were those of ships gently rocking at anchor in a safe harbour. There to the north-west is the beautiful island of Ouessant." Don't you see it ?

SHE (*looking in that direction*): No.

HE: It is there all the same. (*Grandiloquently*) "The King said to Messire John, ' My man, ask anything my hand can give thee, and thou shalt have it.' Messire John asked neither Nantes, nor Rennes, nor St. Malo, not even Douarnenez. He said, ' My King, give me Ouessant, the beautiful island.' The King smiled, for he knew not Ouessant. He had not seen it proudly lifting its head in the midst of the raging ocean. He had not seen the white diadem of mist that crowns its forehead on summer mornings. No ; the King had not seen Ouessant."

SHE: That is very pretty. Where do you find it ?

HE: Here ; it is from a Breton legend by Paul Féval. (*Continuing*) "On this coast the Druids made their last stand against the advancing hordes of Christianity. Driven from the coast the little remnant fled to the neighbouring islands, where they continued their cruel rites. The Isle of Sen, opposite Cape Raz, is thought to have been the final refuge of the last of their priests, who lived there with his daughter. (*She turns her*



head entirely round to look at the famous island, not without danger to the vertebræ brought into play by the effort.) Here the priest died at an advanced age, and his daughter, who was a very pure and beautiful young woman, extremely well educated for the epoch, and so accomplished with the sculls, that she would easily, were she living now, carry off the first prize in a boat-race, lived on in the lonely dwelling. Though a pagan and a sorceress, she was capable of noble deeds, and became famous for the timely aid she lent to fishermen lost in the storm and in danger of perishing. Her skiff skimmed the crests of the waves like a sea-bird, and at the fatal moment, when they thought all was over, she flashed upon their vision, arrayed in white like a guardian angel, tossed them the tow-line, and whisked them off to the shore so fast that it was quite useless for the tempest to attempt to follow them, and in a state of mind that did not permit them to scrutinise with scientific exactitude the motive-power responsible for their salvation, which they, living in an excessively superstitious age, could not fail to regard as supernatural. Her *protégés* safely landed, she returned hastily to her cavern to change her drenched apparel for other more comfortable, not to say, more hygienic."

SHE (*interrupting*): And so this pure and beautiful young woman lived in a damp and dismal cavern?

HE: Yes; but the cavern was comfortably furnished, and in a cupboard behind the bed was her father's treasure, sacks and sacks of gold, enough to buy my father's farm and all his fine cattle a thousand times over.

SHE: How awfully——

HE (*severely*): Did you not promise me last summer that you would never again utter a word of slang in my presence?

SHE (*pouting*): I suppose the American young women never use slang.

HE: No,—at least not after the cockney manner. But let me, like a skilful novelist, bring together the threads of my story, and hasten on to the *dénouement*.

SHE: Yes, do!

HE (*slightly disconcerted*): "This white-robed priestess of the old gods became entangled in a love-affair. In the meantime she had become converted to Christianity, but as a Druid priestess she had made vows of chastity, that her conscience, more sensitive than that of the young women of these days, would not permit her to break by contracting a Christian marriage. So, after having given her father's gold to the abbot of a neighbouring monastery to be disposed of as he thought best, she took her skiff and a single change of raiment, and sailed away beyond the horizon, into the dark, and was never seen again. There being at the moment no demand for new churches or convents, and the wreckers showing faint signs of remorse, the abbot built for their accommodation a city, in the style of architecture of the later Middle Ages, with a touch of the Renaissance."

SHE: Audierne, where we are stopping?

HE: Yes, since remodelled. Don't you detect traces of the ancient spirit of rapine in the present inhabitants?

SHE: I have sometimes thought so.

HE: It is certain. The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.

SHE (*thoughtfully*): Don't you think the pure and beautiful young woman, considered as a species or variety of the human race, is tending to disappear like certain animals of which we read in natural history?

HE: I have inclined to that belief several times in my life. But what gives you that idea?

SHE: The thought had already occurred to me before coming to France, and has gathered strength since I have had a few glimpses into the irregular life led by the women who have chosen our profession, if following art in the desultory way in which you and I follow it can be called a profession. It has sometimes seemed to me that I was on the point of losing my own self-respect. (*She starts and shivers as if she were on the brink of a painful revelation.*)

HE (*without appearing to observe her emotion*): As I have just said, I shared your opinion until about a year ago, when certain events occurred that in a measure modified my mode of thinking.

SHE (*innocently*): That must have been about the time we met at De Vere's studio.

HE (*continuing in the same tone*): As to men, let me say, that they have always been bad, irredeemably bad; so bad that it is difficult to determine in what age they may have been worst, and utterly impossible to assert that at such or such a date they have deteriorated. Man cannot deteriorate; and the person who supposes for the men of any age a relative purity is of a lightness or ingenuousness that appears to me incredible.

SHE: You are supremely unjust to your sex, though I must confess that I regarded the men as horridly bad until a comparatively recent date. It is a curious circumstance that about the time I began to lose all confidence in my own sex, I began to think better of yours.

HE (*meditatively*): How strange and interesting it is to study one's own thoughts and—the thoughts of others! By the way, when did you arrive in France?

SHE: In the spring of last year. We met for the first time some three months later.

HE: And you have not been back since?

SHE (*bending over her easel*): No. You know that I went to pass the winter with my aunt in Andalusia. How odd we should have met you at Granada,—mere chance, of course. Aunt was delighted with your society, and very grateful for the aid you rendered to two lone and unprotected women. Again and again she said to me, how strange it was that a man of your wealth and good manners should remain unmarried.

HE (*wincing*): Did she say that?

SHE: Yes; and a great deal more of the same sort. You had been some time in France, had you not, when I first met you?

HE: Yes. I arrived a year ago last April.

SHE: And you have not been home since?

HE: No. My affairs have not particularly required my presence; my father's farm and cattle are well looked after. But, since we are getting so personal, can you not tell me something about your old home, your girl-life, and how you happened to become an artist? Everything you might have to say on these points would interest me.

SHE (*looking grave and hesitating*): Oh, you would find my personal record intensely prosaic. My past life has not the faintest *nuance* of the romantic. Still, if you insist, I will try. But you must commence; it will give me time to collect my thoughts.

HE (*with an affectation of carelessness*): Certainly, if that would please you. But you will be sadly disappointed; for nothing can be duller than the life of a farmer in the

Western States. It is nothing but the genealogy of horses and cattle and the best methods of rearing them ; questions of soils and rotation of crops, bad seasons, ruinous prices, and all that sort of thing.

SHE: Oh, glide lightly over the technicalities. Your thoughts, your aspirations, the incidents of your daily life, your friends, your associations,—that is what I wish to know.

HE (*with an air of mockery to conceal an evident nervousness*): Well then, here goes! Twenty-eight years ago, near the town of Agueville, in the county of Hoopole, State of Indiana, there was born to the family of Paxton, magnates in the plebeian world of the region, a male child, so weak, so puny, so sickly, that all the old women of the neighbourhood said he would never arrive at the years of discretion, a prophecy that events have apparently justified. I should, perhaps, have said *manhood*, which he attained without other physical drawbacks than those engendered by the insalubrity of the region and the diseases incidental to infancy and boyhood. Shortly after the appearance of this inexperienced being in Hoopole county, his parents decided that he should be called Mark, that name having the sanction of Holy Writ and ancestral precedent, they not deeming worthy of consideration the appellations that history has transmitted to us through the trump of fame, or that romance has surrounded with a luminous halo peculiarly its own. (*He pauses, as if waiting for a tribute of applause, but She remains impassive.*) The child, Mark Paxton, was singularly precocious, so the neighbours said ; his mother deemed him preternaturally intelligent. His father having been induced to share this opinion, it was resolved, in a solemn family-council, that this promising offshoot of an honoured stock

should be withdrawn from the contaminating social influences of that region, and that his rare natural gifts should be gilded, refined, and developed by the best education the country could afford. So he passed in regular gradation by the ever-widening curriculum of the district-school, the village academy, and a celebrated Eastern university, which last institution he quitted, “his brow crowned with victorious laurels,” to use the words of the orator of a delegation of the village Lyceum that met him at the station on his return home. Alas, that so fair a sky should be obscured by clouds, or even veiled by a morning mist! The time had arrived to establish the young man in life, to choose for him a career. Ah, if a career could only be purchased, ready-made, like an article of dress! The father all along desired that his son should be a lawyer, as a stepping-stone to Congress, and the “highest office in the gift of the nation.” The son wished to be an artist, partly because he was tired of study, and the study of the law, and the life that followed it were laborious ; but principally because he was, in spite of what he had thus far accomplished, an idler and a vagabond, longing to wander in undiscovered lands and sail mysterious seas. To the people among whom he had been reared, to be an artist was to be a pariah. To his mother the idea was revolting. Her beloved son to go away among pagans who had never listened to the sage precepts of her favourite preacher, the Reverend Enoch Singsong, and to become the victim, perhaps, of one of those scheming artist-women, whose eccentricities sometimes get into the papers! She could not bear to think of it.

SHE (*looking really pained*): How shocking!

HE: The question of settlement in life proved particularly difficult. (*A*

*pause.*) Young men, you are aware, on arriving at years of discretion,—of manhood, I mean—must settle down and prepare for serious existence, which is, in most cases, an exasperating routine. (*A longer pause.*) The situation was momentous, for it was the first time in this young man's life that his will had run counter to that of his parents. (*A pause so long that his single auditor inclines to the belief that the biography is to be left incomplete.*)

SHE (*aside*): How painful his reminiscences appear to be! What can be the matter? Is it possible he is thinking of the girl he left behind him?

HE (*resuming with an effort*): At last a compromise was effected; life, they say, is made up of compromises. He assented to some of the propositions made to him, and it was agreed that, if he would wait a few years, carrying on meanwhile his art-studies in America, in an amateurish way, he might thereafter travel to learn what effete Europe had to teach him. In the eyes of his neighbours he was the amateur artist only, whose portraits of his father's horses and cattle drawn in charcoal on the barn-door, his caricatures of the district school-teacher and of the Reverend Singsong they had admired when he was a boy, and whose masterpiece, a Storm on Shiver Creek, had astonished and stupefied them later. Thus he passed three years of sad probation, the details of which would not have the slightest interest to the fair listener, at the end of which his relatives, or a part of them, consented to his departure for Paris, where you have met him, and known him, at least superficially. (*He snatches up the guide-book and reads.*) "Although Cape Raz rises two hundred and sixty feet above the level of the sea, it seems at each instant about to be swallowed up in

the waves. Seen at a little distance it resembles a ship rocking at anchor. The earth trembles under your feet. A salt foam covers you, and the awful howling of the waves in the caverns underneath deafens and appals you, and affects you with a vertigo that makes you recoil in terror from the brink."

SHE: That is not so nice as what you read to me a little while ago.

HE: The fault is in the translation; but it is all true. If you could only see that ocean in a storm beating on these cliffs!

SHE: Then you have been down here in winter?

HE: Yes. Did not you see my picture at the last Salon?

SHE: Yes; but I did not know where you found the subject. Where did you make the sketch?

HE: There; further on; nearer the point.

SHE: Oh, yes; I recognise it now. I was quite taken with your picture. It was probably an advance on your Storm on Shiver Creek. If you send it to Agueville, your friends and admirers will, perhaps, confess that effete Europe had something to teach you.

HE: Possibly. But are we not wandering from the matter in hand, to-wit, a sketch of the early life, aspirations, and motives of action of Miss——?

SHE: Margaret Gaines, at your service. You knew that already.

HE: Yes; but not the rest.

SHE: Twenty-six years ago the subject of this weak and watery sketch was born at her father's parsonage near Stoke Pogis.

HE: Stoke Pogis! What a pretty name! I have read in Thomas Hood that there was once a riot there.

SHE: Yes; and Thomas Gray's mother lived there, and there is the churchyard that inspired his immortal

Elegy. Margaret Gaines (*a slight hesitation as if she were not quite certain of her own name*) was a strong and healthy babe, and her infant life glided gently over the little troubles of the first of the seven ages of woman like a stream over its pebbles. From her earliest childhood (without being preternaturally intelligent like the distinguished personage to whose fascinating biography an extremely limited public has listened with intense interest) she was inclined during her ample leisure to the reading of useful books, with which her father's library was liberally provided. Among them were certain works on art which aroused in her breast an instinct lying dormant,—I should say, the art-idea, which, later, was cultivated by visits to the National Gallery and the annual exhibitions, and by lessons from London masters and artists, some of whom spent their summer near her home. Her general education was not neglected. Begun under the wise guidance of an affectionate mother, it was continued at school, and finished, perhaps imperfectly, at a well-known woman's college near London. Why should there not come a crisis in every woman's as in every man's life? (*She pauses, as if oppressed with profound emotion.*)

HE (*aside*): How charming she is with her melancholy memories! But what can she have on her mind? Is it possible there is a lover in the case?

SHE (*not heeding him*): Parents cannot live for ever, as you are doubtless aware; and though mine are still in existence, they wished, in case of accident, that my future should be provided for. There was a difference of opinion in regard to the career I should pursue, and there was, as in your case, a compromise, they partially waiving their deeply-rooted prejudices to my choice of art as a profession, and consenting that after

a fixed period I should go to Paris in care of an aunt, who, as you have remarked, has left me full liberty to employ my time as I choose, and to select such society as I might find agreeable.

HE: A liberty that to my personal knowledge you have not abused. How the time flies! (*Looking up at the sky.*) The sun is sloping slowly to the west. (*Looking at his watch.*) Three o'clock, if it is a minute. How are you getting on with your sketch? (*rising and going to look at her canvas.*) Oh, you idle girl; you have hardly laid it in! Don't you think the perspective is a little out? That tree leans a little too far this way. (*As he leans over a lock of his hair lightly brushes her cheek.*)

SHE (*shrinking with maidenly modesty*): Don't you think you are leaning too far this way, sir?

HE: If I displease you, I will go away; but it is so pleasant to be near those you——ahem!

SHE (*softening*): And how are you getting on with *your* sketch? (*She goes over to inspect it.*) You lazy thing; you have done nothing at all! You have only painted some of the corners and edge of that rock, and,—and,—why, you have made it look like a human face!

HE: How could I help it? (*He passes his arm about her waist.*)

SHE (*with a little shriek, and turning towards her easel*): We are observed. Look there; a gentleman and lady coming down the path!

HE: You are mistaken. They have not yet entered the wood; they have not seen us; we are in the shadow of the rock.

SHE: They are surely coming this way. Are they not Americans?

HE (*bringing his field-glasses to bear on the lower part of the lady's person*): Yes, the lady is; her shoes seem to have been made for her.



SHE: Unkind, unknightly! The national prejudice! Do you recognise them?

HE (*bringing his glasses to bear on the upper part of the lady's person*): They are at this moment in shadow, but I seem to have seen the lady.

SHE (*taking the glasses*): I have certainly seen the gentleman somewhere.

HE (*hastily retaking the glasses*): By all the pagan gods, it is she!

SHE (*snatching the glasses from his trembling hand*): Yes, yes, it is he! (*She sinks with crushing weight on her sketching-stool. They remain motionless as if carved in stone. There is only heard in the oppressive silence the faint sobbing of the sea, and the footsteps of the strangers, who continue calmly to advance and at last stand before them.*)

THE GENTLEMAN (*sternly*): And so, Mistress Margaret Gaines Buxton, I have found you at last, and in strange company. What have you to say to an injured husband?

THE LADY: And you, Mr. Mark Paxton, what have you to say to an injured and deserted wife? Is it bigamy you are contemplating, and with this,—this,—(*she finishes the sentence with a withering glance at the landscape-painter, who tries to hide herself behind her easel. The situation is unique, and no one seems to know precisely how to break the pause that follows. The new-comers endeavour to fill up the interval by glaring fiercely at the cowering culprits.*)

THE GENTLEMAN (*to his companion*): My dear Eusebia, let us not prolong this agonising scene. Shall we not lift the veil? Shall we not tell them all?

THE LADY: Yes; you.

THE GENTLEMAN: No; you.

THE LADY: Yes, we will tell them all. Know, then, sinful couple, that you are free.

HE AND SHE (*faintly, like voices heard in dreams*): Free?

THE LADY: Yes, free as air. Faithless man, I take pleasure in informing you that I am no longer Mrs. Paxton.

THE GENTLEMAN: Incurable woman, the fiat of the law has gone forth; you are no longer Mrs. Buxton.

THE LADY (*in narrative style, with a shade of the dramatic*): When Mr. Buxton was left alone and helpless in his deserted home, when the fire on his domestic hearth went out in the ashes of despair, having first taken the wise precaution to send an artistic amateur (found at Scotland Yard) to inspect the Paris studios, he decided to make the tour of the United States as the only possible means of alleviating his grief. I had met him in Rome five years before, when I was in Europe with mother; and while on his way from New York to St. Louis, he stopped at father's to renew the acquaintance, and impart certain information which it seemed important I should be possessed of. Once there, he seemed disinclined to leave, and his society was such a ray of sunshine shed into our lonely life, that no one felt disposed to hasten his departure. My friends, aware of my irregular condition,—so young and a grass widow—suggested divorce as the only available solution of the problem. I tried it and found it easy as,—but Mr. Buxton is prejudiced against American slang. Incompatibility, mania for art, desertion, failure to provide, etc., etc.; I had reasons enough to divorce a regiment of women. The judge said in granting me permission to resume my maiden name: "The divorce laws of Indiana do not regard marriage as a Gordian knot that can only be severed by the stroke of a tyrant's sword, but as an easily adjusted mutual bond, whose yielding ties fall promptly asunder at

the gentle and humane touch of justice. Mrs. Paxton,—I mean, Miss Greencorn—your heroic conduct is a noble lesson to the down-trodden and abandoned,—I should say, forsaken—women of the State.” Our liberal and impartial laws were equally indulgent to this gentleman. A week after the disappearance of Mrs. Paxton from the aristocratic circles of Hoopole County, she was replaced in the same select society by Mrs. Buxton, younger and lovelier than ever. Then came a tour of Europe as a matter of course. (*Sarcastically*) Being at Douarnenez, and hearing you were here, we came naturally to pay our compliments. Here are our wedding-cards. We would have invited you to the ceremony had we known where you were at the moment.

THE GENTLEMAN (*with a look of fond admiration*): How extremely well you talk, my darling !

THE LADY: Yes ; it is in the family. Father stumped the State at the last presidential election.

THE GENTLEMAN (*looking up at the sun, and then at his watch*): Don't you think, Eusebia, we have wasted all the time we can afford on these unhappy beings ? The carriage waits at Plogoff. The train leaves Douarnenez for Paris at midnight.

THE LADY: Yes, let us be gone ; we have stayed too long. (*As she turns away she lets her shawl fall to her waist as if by accident. Her companion replaces it on her shoulders, at the same time imprinting ostentatiously a kiss upon her lips, which she returns with usury. They saunter off up the path and disappear from the wood without looking back. There follows a pantomime lasting several minutes in which the two crushed and humiliated artists participate without seeming conscious of each other's presence. For a while they sit mutely gazing at the sea making from time to time despairing gestures. Then they rise, mechanically gather up their implements, and prepare to depart. Now and then their eyes meet with a look of interrogation to which neither responds. Other and less gloomy thoughts seem to come with reflection. The hopeless look gives place slowly to one of resignation, then of contentment, then of supreme satisfaction as they proceed arm-in-arm up the path.*)

HE (*fondly embracing her as they emerge into the sunlight*): At last we are out of the woods.

SHE (*yielding to his passionate demonstrations*): Yes ; we have only to fix the day. (*They disappear, radiant, down the slope.*)

## THE SCOTTISH GUARD OF FRANCE.

THE friendships of nations, like the friendships of individuals, are often so strangely assorted as to admit only of the paradoxical explanation that those which differ most in character work best when yoked together. The influence of climate and of race does indeed invincibly assert itself at times of great moment, as, for instance, when the Teutonic nations accepted the Reformation and the Latin nations rejected it; but such critical occasions are rare, and even they can only gradually shake the stability of a popular sentiment that has endured for centuries. England as a nation has not, and rarely has had, a friend; she is isolated, and the world delights to impress her isolation upon her. Once indeed she drew very close to Holland, so close that, after fighting her battles for two generations, she offered to make one Republic with her; but the only results were seven of the fiercest naval engagements ever known, and the ousting of the Dutch from their dominion of the sea. The only European people, who, having passed from under our rule, conspired to return to it, were the Gascons at the close of the Hundred Years' War. There can be no more curious example of the caprices of national friendship than this. Normandy and Brittany, nearer to us in breed, climate, and position, joyfully cast us out; and the hot-blooded province of the South, for all that it had once rebelled against the Black Prince, entreated us to stay.

With Scotland the case was different. She had for many hundred years a friendship, hardly extinguished until the middle of the last century, which brought woes unnumbered both

upon England and herself, and many times threatened to overwhelm England altogether. So surely as an English expedition went to France, down came the Scots across the border. The victory of Neville's Cross was won when Edward the Third lay before Calais; the victory of Flodden was won when Henry the Eighth lay before Tournay. The story was eternally the same.

If that you will France win,  
Then with Scotland first begin.

Nothing could shake the friendship of France and Scotland; and it was when France was in her direst need that Scotland came forward to help her in her own territory, and for reward received the high privilege of guarding the sacred person of the French king.

If we are to believe the legend that grew up around the sentimental connection between the two countries, Charles the Fat had a guard of eighty Scots in the year 886; and Saint Louis, when he went to the Holy Land, took with him, according to one authority, the same number of Scotch gentlemen to guard him night and day, and called them Archers of the Body. Charles the Fifth is said to have added seventy-five archers to this corps, of which two were always to be at his side at very meal. But the true rise of the Scots Guard must be traced to those darker days, after the victory of Agincourt and the irresistible progress of Henry the Fifth had wrung from France the Treaty of Troyes and the heritage of the French crown for an English king.

Already in 1418, four years before

the death of Henry, the Dauphin Charles had sent ambassadors to the Court of Scotland to beg for aid ; and it was then decided by the Regent, Robert Stewart, Duke of Albany, to send a considerable force to France, under his son, Sir John Stewart, Earl of Buchan, Archibald Douglas, Earl of Wigton, and Sir John Stewart of Darnley. Spain provided a fleet of transports, and in May of the following year, a first detachment of four hundred and fifty men, eluding the vigilance of the English, landed in France under Douglas, and was presently followed by seven thousand more under Buchan. Yet another division under John Stewart of Darnley came over in January, 1421, and therewith the Scotch contingent was complete. It consisted, as usual, of lancers armoured from head to heel, and of archers who, it was hoped, though in vain, might vie with their more famous brethren of England. Moreover they had learned by painful experience the tactics of the English, and had to all intents adopted them as their own.

Their first encounter with the English a month later was not encouraging, for though they lost but few men, they left in the hands of the enemy the whole of their pay, twelve thousand crowns in gold, which was a blow on a sensitive point. In a very few weeks, however, they took their revenge by defeating the Duke of Clarence at Beaugé, Clarence himself falling by the hand of Buchan, and some two thousand English falling by his side. The victory was really notable, for it marked the first pause in the long flood of English triumph since Agincourt. Charles, the Dauphin, was lavish in his rewards ; Buchan was made Constable of France, the highest military office in the kingdom ; the other leaders received grants of land, and every captain some bene-

fit in money or in kind. In fact, for the moment the French seemed to have looked upon their troubles as over ; but they were prematurely sanguine.

The defeat of Clarence brought King Henry in high wrath into the field, and French garrisons fell before him like autumn leaves before the wind. No quarter was given to Scotch prisoners, whom he treated as rebels ; it was too much to see his work in France undone by his neighbours in the North, when their king lay prisoner in his hands. So while the French were spared, the Scotch went to the gallows ; and this treatment did not make them less bitter against the English. But presently the great warrior was struck down by his last illness. It was hard for him to die at thirty-four, having done so much ; but men explained that it was a judgment for having permitted his soldiers to violate the Abbey of Saint Fiacre, the son of an ancient king of Scotland. "What," he said impatiently, "I can't go anywhere without being bearded by Scotchmen, living or dead!" Had he lived he would have taken his revenge on this irritating nation ; but in a few weeks he was carried slowly across France to his last home in Westminster Abbey, and the Scots were free to take satisfaction from his successor, if they could get it.

They rested not long before they sought it. In July, 1423, Stewart of Darnley laid siege to Crevant, and on the evening of the 31st he was face to face, across the Yonne, with an English force under the Earl of Salisbury, which had come to relieve the town. The situation of the English was critical ; another army was coming up in their rear, and unless they could force the passage of the river they were ruined. In the course of the night they found a bridge, over which they threw part of their army,

and in the morning the rest forded the river in their front, waist-deep, to attack the Scots who were awaiting them on the other bank. The turning movement of the party that had crossed the bridge, and a sally from the garrison in the rear scared away the Gascons, Spaniards, and Lombards who formed part of the French army, and the Scots were left to fight the battle alone. They fought it gallantly; but out-manœuvred and deserted they had no chance, and were cut to pieces where they stood. Robert Stewart was wounded and taken, and three thousand Scots were left dead on the field. The English army did not exceed four thousand men.

Charles now sent Buchan back to Scotland to beg reinforcements, and in the opening days of 1424, ten thousand Scottish men-at-arms, together with other troops, arrived at Rochelle under the command of Douglas. Charles was in raptures: he made over to Douglas the Duchy of Touraine; and for a few months all went merrily, till on the 17th of August the English met the French and their Scotch allies under the walls of Verneuil. The French had twenty thousand men against twelve thousand English; but the latter had with them John Duke of Bedford, Suffolk, Salisbury, and old John Talbot. The French were drawn up in one dense line, with the Scots men-at-arms dismounted, after the English fashion, in the centre under the Constable; and cavalry on each wing. The English centre consisted of four thousand dismounted men-at-arms, with archers on the flanks. Bedford brought but ten thousand men into line, two thousand archers being detached to guard the horses and baggage. The whole morning the two armies stood and looked at each other, until at last, at three in the afternoon, the French advanced, and were received by the English with

a mighty shout. The French cavalry on the wings charged, swept round the rear of the English, fell upon the baggage, and after capturing some small quantity of it galloped away, making sure that the victory was won. But meanwhile the dismounted men, Scotch and English, had met, and were fighting desperately. For a moment the English gave way before overwhelming numbers, but they recovered themselves, and presently the archers, broken for the moment by the cavalry, rallied, while the baggage-guard, released from all anxiety, hurried up likewise with loud shouts. Then the Scots wavered; the English pressing on broke up the huge battalion, and all was confusion. The slaughter was terrible, for the Scots had warned Bedford before the action that they would neither give nor receive quarter; and they certainly received none. Buchan, Douglas, and his son, were slain, and five thousand more with them, and two hundred more men of rank were taken prisoners. The English loss did not exceed sixteen hundred. Verneuil was in fact as brilliant an action as ever was fought by the English; it was not till Blenheim that France received such another defeat at their hands.

For the present the Scots could do no more for Charles; and Charles could do no more for the Scots, except to appoint them to be his body-guard; and from the year 1425 it may certainly be said that the kings of France were guarded by Scotchmen. It was not till three years later that King James the First bound himself by treaty to send over six thousand more men-at-arms; and before that time the relics of the original force had received yet another disgraceful beating from the English at the Battle of the Herrings. The problem that was set to them in that action was simple enough, being no more



than the capture of an ill-guarded convoy; but the Scotch and the French could not agree as to the method of attack. The former wished to fight on foot, and the latter on horseback. Finally each party attacked in its own style, with the result that the Scotch were very roughly handled by the English archers while the French rode out of range, and that the convoy made its way triumphantly with its Lenten victuals to the trenches round Orleans.

Soon after the tide turned, and under the leadership of Joan of Arc the Scotch auxiliaries took heavy vengeance for their past defeats. It was a Scotchman, Hamish Polwart, who painted her standard; and it was a body-guard of Scotchmen who escorted the French King, under her guidance, to his coronation at Rheims. An old engraving is still preserved which shows them striding into the city, bow and shaft in hand; gigantic men, a head and shoulders taller than any Frenchman, but all bearing the white cross of France on their breasts, and round the hem of their breast-plates the name of their master Charles. During the next fifteen years they were incessantly engaged against their old enemies, until in 1444, a truce was made, and the English, reduced to exhaustion by a task beyond their strength, took their last breathing-space before their final expulsion from France.

Charles turned the time of peace to good account. Hitherto English tactics and organisation had been far superior to French; but France now shot ahead, and laid the foundation of her standing army by the establishment of her *Compagnies d'Ordonnance*. Of these the first two were composed entirely of Scots and were named respectively the Scotch Company of the King's Body-guard, and the

Scotch Men-at-Arms. Thus early were the North Britons installed in the place which they held for three centuries and more, the senior corps, both of Guards and of *Gendarmerie*, in the French army. The rank was high and the service was honourable; the whole company of men-at-arms had the grade of gentlemen; they were well paid and sumptuously dressed, and the flower of the youth of Scotland flocked willingly to the French standard. Every man-at-arms had the right to keep a squire, a valet, a page, and two servants, the first three of which places were filled by young apprentices who could all hope to rise from rank to rank until they reached the highest. Stuarts, Murrays, Douglasses, Spens, Cunninghams, Crawfords, Ramsays, and a score more of great names filled the muster-rolls; and some of them, strangely distorted, may still be read in the lists collected in these days by patriotic countrymen.

The brief truce of 1444 was soon broken, and the Scots at liberty to do their worst against the English. Gascony, as has been said, would have clung to England, so a Scotch captain, Robert Patillock, was sent to reduce it to the French allegiance,—as strange an incongruity as can be found in history. The feeble Somerset, whose avarice had done more to destroy English dominion in France even than French military reform, sought to gain the Scots by bribery, but succeeded only in enticing one Robert Campbell to a traitor's death. France, except Calais, was lost to England, and the Scotch companies were now to fight against new enemies.

A few years later, in 1461, Charles the Seventh died, amid the loud lamentation of his faithful Scots, and there came on the scene the man whom the genius of Walter Scott has

identified for ever with the Scotch Guard, King Louis the Eleventh, "with the leaden Virgin in his hat." The turbulent French nobles, headed by Charles of Charolais, soon to be known as Charles the Bold, at once turned against him; and at Montlhéry the two parties met to decide the issue by force of arms. Louis, alive, as few soldiers of the day were, to the value of rapid movement, allowed no time for his army to be concentrated, but pressed on with a handful of men, his Guards and two thousand cavalry, and meeting the Burgundians attacked them without hesitation. His assault was so impetuous that he routed the enemy's vanguard, which was ill-ordered and undisciplined. But the bulk of the Burgundians were still undamaged, and Louis was so hard pressed that but for the devotion of the Scotch Guard he would not have saved the day. When night came he still held his position, but each side was under the impression that it had gained the victory; and the Scotch Guards finally carried him back in their arms to the castle of Montlhéry, where they closed the engagement by beating off a detachment of the enemy's cavalry and severely wounding Charles himself.

Three years later, at the siege of Liége, a sally by the townsmen brought Louis into still greater peril of his life, and put his Guard still more to the proof in defence of his person. True to their charge, they took their stand in the house where he lay, and refused to budge an inch, showering arrows in the confusion impartially on friend and foe, but at all events sweeping the whole turmoil away. Louis then formed a fresh company of Guardsmen, to which none were admitted but gentlemen of good family, and so gathered yet another hundred Scots around him. In the days of an old age sour and suspicious even be-

No. 437.—VOL. LXXIII.

yond those of his prime, the Scottish Guards seem to have been the one body that he regarded with something approaching to confidence; and it was to them that on his deathbed he entrusted the care of his son Charles.

With him they began a new career of adventure; and the country in which the English had made, through Hawkwood, an undying name, looked for the first time, not without amazement, on the Guard that escorted the French King through Florence and Rome. The Swiss, with their military dignity and astonishing order, were the force that most impressed the men, but the Scots in their white jerkins covered with gold embroidery, setting off their stately appearance and their gigantic stature, conquered men and women alike; and many a tender glance, if we are to believe a rhyming French chronicle, was thrown at them as they rode through the streets of Rome. "Each man's a giant, big as an elephant, bold and triumphant; God save them all!": such were the whispers that passed, according to our authority, from lip to lip of the Roman ladies, and we cannot doubt but that they were received with becoming condescension by the Gentlemen of the Guard.

Then, after the idle time of display, came that of serious business. At Fornovo, during the first retreat from Italy, a hundred of the Scottish Guard stood shoulder to shoulder against a charge of Italian men-at-arms, after a fashion not expected of archers taken at such disadvantage, and did great execution with their swords, though in saving the King they left a tenth of their number dead on the ground. But Charles had endeared himself most singularly to his Scotch archers; so much so that one actually died of grief at his death.

After him came Louis the Twelfth, who carried on the enterprise against

Italy as vigorously as his predecessor and showed a particular predilection for the Scots, who served him, volunteers as well as Guards, with more devotion than success, and in the person of Marshal Stuart d'Aubigny earned grateful recognition in the chronicles of Brantôme. The Guard was more fortunate than its chivalrous countrymen. It helped to crush the power of Venice at Agnadel in 1509, and did most notable service against the Spanish at Ravenna in 1512. At the latter action the French infantry, landsknechts for the most part, had been pretty well beaten by the artillery and musketry of the Spaniards, when two hundred of the Scottish archers came up, armed with axes, and fell on with such fury that they beat the Spaniards back and captured their most brilliant soldier, the Marquis Pescayra himself. So excellent indeed was the service done by the Scottish auxiliaries that Louis in 1513 granted letters of denizenation to the Scottish people at large, and drew the bond that united the two nations closer than ever.

Shortly after the Guard was engaged in the terrible two days' battle of the French against the revolted Swiss at Marignano, where they behaved so gallantly that a French historian, Joachim du Bellay, vowed he would make the world ring with their fame. Then, ten years later, they learned at Pavia the meaning of a great defeat, and for the first time failed, in spite of all possible bravery, to save their sovereign in the time of need. Pescayra, the same man who had surrendered to them at Ravenna, had been carefully studying the tactics of musketry in the interval, and had taught the Spanish arquebusiers how to maintain a continuous fire which could not only annihilate columns of pikemen, but overthrow the chivalry of France as efficiently as the archers

of Crecy had overthrown it. So Francis, his armour dented in a score of places by bullets, was taken prisoner in spite of the body-guard, after the heaviest defeat suffered by the French since Agincourt. The Scotch enjoy the credit of having been cut to pieces around him; but the muster-rolls show that, how many soever may have been wounded, but few were killed, so the legend must unfortunately be abandoned.

We come next to the strangest tragedy in the history of the Scottish Guards, the death of a king of France by the hand of one of them. The long wars of France and the Empire had for the moment ceased with the peace of Chateau Cambresis, and the King, Henry the Second, was celebrating the weddings of his sister and daughter with the usual amusement of jousts. He ran two courses against the Duke of Savoy and the Duke of Guise with much skill, for he was one of the best horsemen in his kingdom; and then in an unlucky moment he called on Gabriel Montgomery, son of the Captain of the Scottish Guard, and himself second in command, to break yet another lance with him. Montgomery, a big, powerful young fellow, was not very eager; but he obeyed, and struck the King so roughly with his lance as almost to thrust him out of the saddle. Irritated by his failure, Henry challenged him to run again. Montgomery refused point-blank, and when pressed offered every excuse that he could find; the Queen also twice endeavoured to dissuade the King, but in vain. He bade Montgomery on his allegiance to mount, and the course was run. Both lances were shattered, but the broken shaft in Montgomery's hand flew up, and forcing open the visor of his helmet drove a splinter deep into the King's head above the right eye. Henry dropped his reins and reeled over his

horse's neck, but, on being lifted from the saddle, said that it was nothing, and that Montgomery was not to blame. The wound was, however, fatal, and in a fortnight he was dead.

*Quem Mars non rapuit, Martis imago rapit*, wrote the French court-poet of the day, without noticing the really tragic point in the incident. Gabriel, poor man, also came to a bad end, for he embraced Protestantism, became a leader of the Huguenots, and after inflicting a severe defeat on the Catholics at Orthez, was finally captured, after a gallant defence of a besieged town, and beheaded in Paris.

His career was emblematic of much that went forward in the sixteenth century. Religious differences, with two such persons as Mary Stuart and John Knox to represent opposing parties, were fast undermining the old friendship of France and Scotland. Scotch Catholics fled to France, and French Huguenots took refuge in England, and England had considerably the best of the exchange. Henry the Third even refused to take a Scotch company of men-at-arms, which had volunteered to serve him, into his pay. England, in fact, was growing too strong to be lightly offended, and the Scotch alliance, since it did not bind the whole nation, was no longer of value. Henry the Fourth was a man far more to the taste of Scotland at large; the old allies helped him to gain his throne, and the Guard, honoured by him as by every sovereign, escorted him to his coronation.

So for a short time the ancient friendship was revived and refreshed by tactful compliments from Henry, who gave to all Scots resident in France greater advantages than they had ever enjoyed, and to the Guards in particular his own special protection. But the play was by this time played out. England and Scotland

were now united under one crown, and the French began to complain that the recruits for the Guard were not Scotch, but English; and though there had been in the past English companies in the French service, and were yet to be regiments, Royal-Anglais and others, yet the true Englishman preferred as a rule to fight against rather than for France, while Frenchmen, on their part, liked the English better as enemies than as friends. The Scotch Guard rapidly ceased to be Scotch in anything but name. As early as 1612 the corps presented a petition of complaint that two-thirds of its numbers were French, and that its old privileges were disappearing. James the First took up their cause in England, and endeavoured to reinstate them, not without a certain measure of success; but the heart of the matter, the old alliance of France and Scotland, was gone, and nothing but the empty husk remained. There was still the old division of twenty-five Archers of the Body, and seventy-five Archers of the Guard; but French names became ever more frequent, and Scotch names rarer on the muster-rolls.

The outward change came more swiftly in the senior corps of archers than in that of the men-at-arms. The last Scotch captain of the former was appropriately enough the Gabriel Montgomery who had been the death of Henry the Second; and his reign ceased in 1557, the very year, singular to say, when the first Scotch covenant was signed in Edinburgh, and but one year before the final expulsion of the English from Calais. The coincidence is notable, for from the moment that the Scotch ceased to be a united nation the old alliance began to wane. The men-at-arms enjoyed a Scotch chief for some time longer. To all intent the corps was an appanage of the Stuarts of Aubigny,

James Hamilton, Earl of Arran, furnishing in 1515 the one break during a century and a half of the eternal recurrence of the same name. But the list of the last five captains is curious. In 1567 James the Sixth of Scotland was appointed at the request of his mother Mary: in 1601 Henry, afterwards Prince of Wales, succeeded him; and in 1620 Charles, Prince of Wales, followed his brother. Then came a captain who brought in a new name, George Gordon, Earl of Enzie, afterwards second Marquis of Huntly. He actually took command of them, and served with great distinction against the Austrians in Lorraine and Alsace; fighting indeed for the French king more resolutely than he ever fought for his own sovereign, though he ended his career on the scaffold through the tender mercies of his brother-in-law Argyll. Finally, in 1645, the year of Naseby, came James, Duke of York, who fittingly closed the reign of the Stuarts alike over the Scotch men-at-arms and the kingdom of Great Britain. Thus of the five captains three were heirs-apparent to the crown of England, three actually ascended the throne, and two, as if to make a parallel with Gabriel Montgomery of the archers, fell by the headsman's axe.

In 1667 Louis the Fourteenth took the command to himself; and in this very same year there was added to the French service a new corps of English men-at-arms, which took rank after their brethren of Scotland. It was composed of a medley of English, Scotch, and Irish Catholics brought over by a Hamilton of the House of Abercorn. Louis drafted the Scotchmen into the corps of their compatriots, and erected the remainder into the English Company already named, with himself for captain and Hamilton for lieutenant. The new

men-at-arms wore, like so many of the French regiments, a uniform of scarlet, which had been adopted twenty years before by the English, while their Scottish comrades wore blue. Both bodies saw plenty of active service, the Scotch meeting the English at Dunkirk Dunes, and the English at Namur, Steinkirk, and Malplaquet. But, as with the archers, both soon became French in everything but name, and in 1788 they were disbanded. Minden was the last battlefield of the Scotch men-at-arms, so that they were unlucky in their final exit from active service.

The senior corps, the original archers, likewise perished in the Revolution, though it was galvanised into a false resurrection after Waterloo, and actually endured until 1830. Though it had long lost its natural character, it jealously retained until the crash of 1789 all its curious old privileges, which, though they led to constant wrangles with other regiments, had been duly allowed by Louis the Fourteenth. He was actually obliged to intervene at his own wedding to compose a dispute as to the precedence of the Scots Guards and the Cent Gentilshommes. "Proud as a Scotchman" was an old proverb in France, and their successors in the Body-guard did their best to justify it. But the most curious survival, long after a word of Scotch had been heard in the corps, was the practice of answering *hamir* (a corruption for *I am here*) when the roll was called, which was religiously maintained, at all events, down to the Revolution.

In truth one has only to look at an old French Army List to appreciate the extreme conservatism of that nation, at any rate in military matters, before 1789. One such list, included in a collection of the forces of Europe, which was prepared by Captain Lloyd in 1761, is now lying



before the writer. At the head of all come the Household troops, led of course by the Scotch, then the Gendarmerie, again led by the Scotch, and immediately followed by the English. In the Horse are the Royal Strangers, and Dauphin's Strangers, Royal Croatia, Royal Piedmont, Royal Germany, Royal Poland; in the Guards, the Swiss; in the Line nine regiments called Swiss, five called, and probably rightly, Irish, two German, a Royal Italian, a Royal Bavarian, and a Royal Corsican; and all this at the close of the Seven Years' War. Further, it is particularly noted that certain Royal Scots, "then in the French service," took precedence by Ordinance of 1670 as the twelfth regiment of the French line. If it be asked where they are now, we have only to turn back a few pages to the list of the British army, and there we shall find them as we know them still, at the head of the English line. It does not fall to the lot of every regiment to have been called Royal in two distinct and bitterly hostile armies; but here there is, in the heart of us, a living record of the transition from Scotland and France against England, to England and Scotland against France.

The sight suggests curious reflections, when one thinks of the cost paid to make Royal Ecossais into Royal Scots. To go no further back than the thirteenth century, the list of battles is terribly long: Dunbar in 1296, Cambuskenneth, Falkirk (after which Edward tried to accomplish the union four hundred years before his time), Bannockburn, Halidon Hill, Nevill's Cross, Homildon Hill, then passing across the Channel, Beaugé,

Crevant, Verneuil, Patay,—all of them Scotch actions, and a hundred minor engagements equally Scotch,—Flodden, Solway Moss, Pinkie, Leith, Haddington, Newburn, Preston, Dunbar, to say nothing of border-raids beyond name or number. And all this, and a great deal more, was needed to unite under one government a country of one race and one language, divided by an arbitrary boundary, and kept apart mainly by their opposing relations with France. England wasted incalculable strength in her mad endeavour to annex the territory of her powerful neighbour to the South, and just when she seemed to have gained her end the Scotch stepped in and spoiled all. The incident was unpleasant at the time, but it was the best service that they could have done to us, and equally to France. It encouraged them, however, on a wrong path, for their true way lay with England; and it is significant that though Scotchmen were happy enough in France, Frenchmen were much the reverse of happy in Scotland. But for the unlucky chance that set such a race as the Stuarts on the throne of England it is possible that Scotch influence might have done something in promoting friendship between United Britain and France; and even as things are, it may perhaps be pleasant for Frenchmen to remember that the most sturdy of those colonists who have fretted her sensitive soul by eternally hoisting the Union Jack in new places are generally of the same race as those who delivered France from the English, and gave to her army the first of all its regiments and to her kings the most faithful guard that ever saved a crown.

## THE FAILURE OF PHILANTHROPY.

GREAT is the activity of those who go about doing good, and much has been done by them. In one small district in East London, and during one man's experience, institutes have been established and all sorts of classes drawn together; schools have been built and improved, clubs have been fostered, entertainments and excursions have been promoted, and much done to make pleasure more common and more healthy. Crazy and unwholesome houses have been replaced by sound and well-planned structures; open spaces have been secured; a free library and public baths have been opened; and the Poor Law infirmary has been raised to the level of a hospital with skilled nursing and every medical luxury. Many men and women, members of charitable societies or of public bodies, devote their time to planning schemes for the improvement of the condition of the people, and in some cases themselves see to the execution of their schemes. The standard of health and of comfort has in consequence been raised; children are better nourished and better clad; rooms are better furnished and common pleasures are of a higher character.

Philanthropy is active, but the prevailing feeling is one of anxiety. The richer people are nervous. They ask, "What can be done for the Unemployed?" They are shy of their possessions; they give, and distrust. The poor are more restless at tales of starvation, more indignant at the contrast between the shirt-maker's wage of ten shillings a week and the shirt-wearer's wage of £100 a week. They receive, and are dissatisfied. The rich

are asking, "To what purpose do we do good?" The poor are asking, "Why do the rich do good? Does Job serve God for naught?" With all its manifold activity philanthropy still fails to create peace and goodwill. What, then, is the cause of this failure?

The cause of the failure may perhaps be found in the motive which lies behind much good-doing. Motives are more important than methods. The reason from which a man acts will in the long run tell more on his neighbours than the way in which he acts. A friend with love in his heart may blunder in the sort of gift which he bestows, and yet evoke in the recipient an energy which comes of gratitude; while a stranger may give according to the best-known principles of charity, and nevertheless create a resentment destructive of the best qualities of human nature. A good motive may make mistakes, but at least it will fit acts to needs; a good method may for a time serve its purpose, but in the end it becomes lifeless and deadening. Motive is the soil on which the roots of action feed. If the soil be poor and shallow the tree of action may flourish for a season, and people will rejoice in its fruit or its shade; but in the time of trial it will fail, and they who sought its shelter will curse it for its false promise. If the soil be pure and deep the tree may be of slow growth, but it will abide and its fruits will be good.

In considering, then, the failure of philanthropy the question to be asked is, "What are its motives?"

The first is, probably, pity. Men cannot endure the sight of suffering; they cannot bear to see the starving

and shivering creatures in the damp darkness of the streets, as they drive to their own bright-coloured homes. The thought of the sadness and the misery of the world is a heavy burden for a human being to bear. Men pity the sorrows of the poor: they build therefore better houses and furnish better hospitals; they open schools and institutes in which trades are taught; they send children for country holidays; they provide places of entertainment, and they give their thousands annually in charity.

The second motive is a sort of pride in order. Men do not like to have in the midst of their city an unhealthy area, a joyless population, a disinherited class. They feel about such things as a landlord feels about some untidy portion of his estate; or they are conscious of an inconsistency between such facts and their own theory of society. They support, therefore, proposals for more taxes to be spent on substituting sound for unhealthy houses, in providing open spaces, in giving work to the unemployed, food to children, and pensions to the aged. They think that the worker ought in this life to have a share of the good things; and that what is called socialism is a means of giving the people part payment for their work.

Such motives, good so far as they go, lie at the root of much philanthropic activity. Obviously they would cease to act if every one had enough money to live comfortably all his days. There would be no stirring of pity if there were no ragged and starving neighbours, no dull and joyless children, no poverty apart from vice. There would be no pricks of conscience if every worker had his fair share of the good things which have come to this generation. Modern philanthropy aims to create a community of well-paid and well-fed men and women. If it achieved its end there would be

well-built cities with frequent open spaces, with possible pleasures for all who would work, and with large prisons for idlers and vagabonds. Such cities compared with the reality might seem to belong to an earthly paradise, and it is easy to understand how the desire to create such a paradise captivates people of kind hearts and prosaic minds. But Walt Whitman says truly:

I dreamed in a dream I saw a city invincible to the attacks of the whole rest of the earth.

I dreamed that was the new City of Friends. Nothing was greater than the quality of robust love; it led the rest;

It was seen every hour in the actions of the men of that city,  
And in all their looks and words.

The motives of much modern philanthropy, pity, pride, and a sense of order, will never create a City of Friends. They do not make men care for the man among men, for the individual among the masses. They do not make them "self-reverent and reverencing each." They do not open their ears to hear that appeal for respect and for friendliness which is more truly human than the craving for bread. They will never work so as to establish peace and goodwill, nor so as to create that joy in living which comes by bearing others' burdens.

Philanthropy, governed by the ordinary motives, simply acts so as to get poverty and suffering out of the way. It makes men passionate for the accomplishment of their schemes, and sometimes allows one who is eager to be helpful to depart from the ways of truth and to crush his higher instincts. A philanthropist, inspired by such motives, may, as many have been known to do, by his gifts corrupt a whole neighbourhood. There are Boards of Guardians which, under the impulse of pity, have granted out-relief and thereby set a population cringing and grudging. There are

entertainments which make for disorder, waste, and ingratitude. There are schools where the provision of food and clothing has begot in the children a rivalry of greed, in the parents a spirit of discord, and turned steady workers into restless beggars.

Generations of thoughtful and devoted people have denounced such giving. They seem to denounce in vain, and pity often makes people of goodwill more powerful for mischief among the poor than greedy employers. A "kind lady" has been a greater evil in a district than a "hard master," and in times of distress, the first prayer of the true friends of the poor is, "Save us from charitable funds."

The ordinary motives, again, supply no security that a philanthropist may not be both unjust and cruel and (after the likeness of Hollingsworth in Hawthorne's romance) betray love for the sake of his schemes, and crush a soul for the sake of a principle or an institution. There are men and women who have given up home and prospects to forward some system of relief which has seemed to them to be for the good of humanity. They believe, for example, the prevention of State relief, the support of some industrial scheme, or the adoption of certain principles, to be the necessary reform. They give freely of time and of money to accomplish their object; but somehow their gifts leave a track of suspicion and ill-will. They crush flowers which grow by the wayside in their earnest progress to reach their end; they destroy the graces of gratitude and trust. If they do establish independence, or succeed in organising charity, they do not hasten the building of the City of Friends.

Lastly, a philanthropist, moved by pity or love of order, may, as the revolutionists of the Continent, win support by appeals to men's sense of their rights. The men of the Revolu-

tion had a feeling for their fellows, and a sense of rights; but, as Mazzini has shown, they failed because of the motives by which they were governed. They roused indeed energy and enthusiasm: they were devoted, and they reached their ends; but by preaching to people of their rights they roused also the demon of selfishness, and in the end substituted the reign of a greedy class with its Panama scandals for that of a tyrant class with its boasts that it would make the poor eat straw.

Motives are more than methods, and it may fairly be urged that it is because of the motives which underlie much modern philanthropy and make it anxious only to do something for the poor,—anyhow, by any means, so that their circumstances are improved—that philanthropy does not succeed.

One evident sign of its failure is, the present state of dissatisfaction into which both rich and poor have fallen. Money is given, schemes are supported, improvements are made, but there is no great increase of happiness and little sense of peace. Pilgrims through life to-day do not, perhaps, so easily find the City of Friends as those pilgrims who travelled in days when less was done for others' comfort. There are, indeed, two forms of evil which seem to be growing in the midst of the improved conditions,—impertinence and gambling. These evils the ways of philanthropy tend to encourage rather than to check.

Philanthropists, for example, who treat men as beings just to be warmed and housed and fed, weaken the self-reverence which lies at the root of all reverence. They are apt to crush with a gift the smoking flax of manhood, and to enter noisily into the chambers of memory haunted by old sins. They sometimes blame a generous act which is the one glory

of a life, and praise a course of selfishness which has ended in the acquisition of property. They often offer excuses when the wrongdoer is longing for the honour of a rebuke, and they boldly discuss a past before which they ought to be silent. They develope in themselves and in others the impertinence which, mocking both at sin and at goodness, threatens in its arrogance to destroy the foundations of society.

Or again, those reformers who, in their hurry to get rid of poverty and suffering, rouse the greed of the poor and the fear of the rich, who offer by schemes or by laws to banish poverty, who by tales of starvation excite the dulled feelings of the indolent, and by promises of gifts tempt the poor, encourage in both rich and poor the spirit of gambling which would get all for nothing and enjoy excitement without effort.

The rich people, for example, who are led to expect that by a gift, by an institution, or by a law, that by staking, as it were, a subscription or a vote they may win the reformation of society, are taught to expect something for nothing, a result out of proportion to effort. While on the other side those children who scramble for dinner-tickets, the poor who are surprised by Christmas gifts, the starving who are led to depend on chance bounty, are drawn out of the way of regular work, which is hard and dull but profitable, to take another way which is easy and full of excitement but unprofitable. Rich and poor are thus led to the habits of thought and action which bring the curse of gambling.

Apart, however, from such results as these, it is matter of common talk that the efforts of philanthropy are disappointing, and that every year new societies and new efforts have to be developed to supply what is

wanting in those of previous years. The failure is due mainly to the motives underlying the efforts. Neither pity nor logic necessarily makes a man treat his fellows with reverence, nor gives them what their manhood demands. The prevailing motives which make men help their neighbours do not make them consider their temptations or aspirations. They exhaust themselves when relief is given, or a system established.

Another motive must be added to those already in force, if service is to meet the needs of those who, although poor or degraded, have within them a divine spark making them akin with the highest.

That motive it is difficult to express in words which will not raise associations disturbing to the meaning of the words. The phrases of religion and of the Bible imply such different ideas to different people that it is almost hopeless to expect to convey a simple thought by the use of one of these phrases. If, however, it were possible to use such a phrase, we would say that the motive which is wanted is Christian godliness, the continued consciousness of a power making for right, the sense of a love of which all other loves are but broken lights, the assurance that this power and love are in our very midst manifest in the men and women and children of our time. Whatever such a motive be called, it is obviously not one which is common. People are not moved to speech or to silence, to one act or another act, by the thought that a power greater than their own is shaping their ends, rough hew them as they may. They are not under authority; their aim is rather to proclaim their freedom to do as they like. The mass of mankind does not move as if it were marshalled, it is rather broken up into parties or even into units. Each calls



him master whom his own will can reject.

If in matters of charity people were conscious of an authority it was impossible to reject, if they recognised this authority to be exercised for good, if they read its orders in the signs of the times, and in the words and works of the men of to-day, then at any rate two results would follow.

Firstly, pity and thought would come into line. Their irregular action is at present the cause of many disasters. Like untrained horses, first one and then the other dashes ahead and draws behind it the chariot of philanthropy. A master-hand is needed both to urge and to restrain. Under such guidance pity would make men feel for the sorrows of their neighbours, but thought would not let pity be spasmodic, hasty, and short-sighted. Thought would show what ought to be done, and pity would not let action linger. Pity and thought would be recognised as of equal inspiration; or to put the same thing in another way, if men knew themselves as ambassadors of a King whose will was perfect, and whose power reached everywhere, they could not support a social scheme one year with £70,000 and neglect it the following year. They could not treat ways of charity as if they were their own, to take up or let go. They could not be "half believers in some casual creed." They could not be unstable and double-minded, wavering between one course and another. They could not know one way to be right, and not be persistent. Or to put it once more in another form, if philanthropists had traced cause and effect in the history of mankind, and had come to know that an omnipotent power directed the solemn and orderly process, they could not think by founding a society to save men from the natural consequences of their

actions. They would not dare to use exaggerations to get money. They would seek rather the next link in the chain, obeying the law of right as they had learned to know it, and wait the coming of the eternal purpose.

The first result of this new motive would be the introduction into philanthropy of the same spirit which made Luther say, "Here I stand, I can do no other," or Ivan Ivanovitch meet his accusers with the calm, "How otherwise?" And the crowds of nobles and commoners salute the pope's appeal for a crusade with the shout "God wills it!" Philanthropists, that is to say, would hear a call to which their whole being would be subject. The voice of feeling, old as human nature itself, the voice of science, new as to-day, would direct an identical course. Inactivity and indifference would be impossible; but fitful action, impatience, trust in an Act of Parliament as if by parliament miracles could be wrought, trust in a well-intentioned lie as if cause could escape its effect,—all these and many other belongings of modern philanthropy would also become impossible.

A second result of the application of this new motive would be greater regard for the higher needs of the individual. If men realised that the character of the authority whose will they have to obey lies hidden in common men and women, they would pay a new sort of attention to their needs. If they felt that the secret of the force which had overwhelmed great nations, and which now, through pity and thought, compelled their own actions, would be discovered when each human being was at his best, they would with a new enthusiasm cherish and develop every talent and every capacity of every man, woman, and child.

At present the poor man is thought of as a bundle of wants and cries, or

as a creature subject to cold and hunger. He is relieved, therefore, with gifts to hush these cries and soothe these pains, relieved in much the same way, if not so adequately, as a horse is relieved when he is put into a better-built stable, given good food, and turned out for a run in an open space. If, however, the poor man were thought of as a spirit, as a being with infinite hope, with a capacity for righteousness and for love, and if from each a broken whisper were heard, "I and the Father are one," "As my Father loves so I love," his treatment would be very different.

The poor man in the street wants not only warmth and food; he wants to think, to be good and to love. The beggar's likeness to the highest is more striking than his rags; his need for respect is even more pressing than his need for food; his possibilities of being thrown into shadow by his attempts to deceive.

Such a new motive would have a definite practical issue. It would be impossible, for instance, to throw money to one of such beggars and hurry on; it would be impossible to believe that vulgar songs and second-rate pictures are sufficient to amuse the poor; it would be impossible by exaggerated advertisement and appeals to low motives to attempt to do good.

Assume a man to feel, as strongly as it is possible to feel, pity for the homeless, the ignorant, the starving; assume that he knows as clearly as it is possible to know that better conditions, healthier houses, wider space, purer air, fuller education, individual friendship, will best relieve his suffering; assume further that he recognises each man, woman, and child as a letter spelling the name all seek to understand, or as a vessel containing the secret which will explain all mysteries, — what will he do? Obviously he will be as enthusiastic

to provide air, water, and schools as the most devoted missionary is to provide dinners and shelters; he will as eagerly restrain himself from relieving crowds as others spend themselves in relieving them; he will say "I must not" as conscientiously as they say "I must;" and lastly, he will hold it his duty to make common what is best, so that every one may by means of knowledge and art rise to his highest. The philanthropist, under the impulse of this motive, will give by quite another measure than that of a tenth or a half, and by quite another rule than that of expediency. He will give himself, and by study he will make himself worth giving. There would be a City of Friends; and in the city the poor would not only have green spaces accessible to the tired and feeble, frequent baths, clean streets, healthy homes, picture-galleries, libraries, and lectures, but each would also have the personal care of a brother man better equipped than himself with the gifts of the time; and all men from the lowest to the greatest would delight to know one another. The philanthropy of the day does not supply these things. There may be millions spent annually, but the poor still want space, air, and water: they want the means of knowing the things by which they would grow to the height of their being and enjoy life; and they have not friends among the rich.

Archbishop Tait once expressed regret that more religious people were not liberal, and that more liberal people were not religious. He saw, that is to say, the need of a motive strong enough to bring these forces into line and make them do common service. In the same way we must regret that charity is so often unscientific, and that scientific people are often so deficient in charitable impulse. The pendulum of action sways from

one moment, when the tendency is to give free schools and free dinners, and when socialism is popular, to another moment, when the tendency is to let every one work for his own hand and when cynicism is popular. Another motive is necessary; one strong enough to make the hasty, warm-hearted givers subject themselves to methods shaped by thought, and strong enough also to make those who know what ought to be done and what ought not to be done passionate both in their action and in their patience.

Such a motive is to be found in that consciousness which is the essence of religion. Every motive, indeed, which has had force enough to establish a series of actions has found its force from what was known of God in the days in which it was born. Religion, it has been truly said, lies under all great political movements. Modern philanthropy, whose shortcomings are so obvious, derives its strength from ancient religion. Ask it whence it got its human pity, or its sense of order, it will answer:

'Twas when the heavenly house I trod,  
And lay upon the breast of God.

The service of God goes before the service of man.

All this means that philanthropy must rest on religion; but in some circles this passes as a truism, and certain forms of philanthropy get special support because they have what is called a religious basis. Calm observers, however, see little distinction in their methods. A few religious phrases, and certain acts of worship, do not affect the way in which social problems are met or individuals treated. A breakfast, for instance, at which a gospel address is given, is not less demoralising or more sustaining than one given without

such an address. A visit to a poor man when the Bible is read, or the theory of the position of the Church explained, does not of necessity increase his goodwill any more than a visit where the talk has been of common things.

Religion, indeed, when it is claimed as the basis of philanthropy, has not always that consciousness of God which is the essence of religion. Every age, perhaps every individual, has to discover what is the name of the controlling power and what is the source of the spark which troubles the clod. It preserves its discovery in forms of words or of worship which are good if used by succeeding ages as a means for further discovery, but which are bad if used as the final expression of all truth. The religion which is now connected with philanthropy is often that which rests on forms or words used by past generations to express their consciousness of God, and not that which rests on a consciousness derived by men of to-day from the revelations of to-day.

The conclusion of the whole matter for one distressed by what he has seen of man's failure to do good is that philanthropists should be better students of the signs of the times, and before giving or doing should find out, not what is expedient, but what it is that must be done. The rich, before they go to deal with their poor disinherited brother, should, like Jacob, wrestle with the spirit which haunts their path and breathes in science, politics, and art; and they should never let it go till they know its name and its will. Philanthropists should think before they act, and pray for the individual before they begin to help him. A religion of the nineteenth century is necessary to its philanthropy.

## ALEXANDER MACMILLAN.

(A PERSONAL REMINISCENCE.)

It was some time in the autumn of 1858, when I was an undergraduate at Cambridge, that I first knew Alexander Macmillan. Being of a bookish disposition, I had been from my Freshman's term a haunter of the shop in Trinity Street, but had never held speech with either partner in the firm until the occasion referred to. I remember well Mr. Macmillan addressing me in friendly words on the strength (if I remember rightly) of a paper I had written in one of those university magazines which in each successive generation of undergraduates "come like shadows," and in a year or two "so depart." He had been struck with something in the paper, and out of the conversation thus begun arose a friendship I do not hesitate to call one of the most valuable and valued of my life.

The preceding year, 1857, had been a memorable and a critical one in the history of the firm. The elder brother Daniel had died in the summer, leaving Alexander the poorer for the loss of a beloved brother, and the prospects of the firm so far dimmed that a mind of singular strength and a rare sympathy with all that was highest in religious and speculative thought was no longer at hand to guide and suggest. But already the seeds of future success for the business had been sown and were bearing fruit. As early as 1855 the name of Frederick Maurice was closely associated with the young firm. Kingsley's *WESTWARD HO!* in its original three-volumed form appeared in that year and by 1857 had reached a third edition; and in the same year the

firm achieved what Alexander Macmillan always called his first great popular success in *TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL DAYS*. The author of that admirable story has related for us in his pathetic memoir of Daniel Macmillan the fortunes of both brothers up to this date. Henceforth the business, already well started on the lines it was mainly to follow, was the creation and development of the younger brother; for it was not until after many years that he was able to associate others with him in partnership.

The acquaintance I thus formed with Alexander at this juncture speedily passed into something like intimacy, and not long after I was welcomed by the family circle at the house in Trinity Street, in the lower portion of which the business was carried on. The household consisted of Alexander Macmillan, his wife and four young children, and his brother's widow, with her own four children, whom Alexander had promptly adopted on the death of their father, making of them one family with his own, until they were married or otherwise established in life elsewhere. The impression of those Cambridge days from 1858 to 1860 is still singularly fresh and full of charm to the present writer—the absolute unity in affection and purpose of this twofold family, and (if it may be said without offence) the total absence in the head of the household of even the consciousness that he was doing anything exceptional or out of the way. And the two mothers (both long since passed away) were rivals only in the keenness of their admiration and homage for the

thinkers and poets who were already making the name of the firm famous beyond the limits of Cambridge.

From 1860 to 1866 I was called by the work of my profession into the country, and for these six years saw little or nothing of the family, then settled in the neighbourhood of London. But on my own return to town the old intimacy was revived, and thenceforth I had continual opportunity of seeing and knowing Mr. Macmillan under his own roof, until the recent failure of his health. Those six years during which I had lost sight of him had brought him a wide extension of his business, and with it troops of new writers who had become, as usual, his friends. The man himself had grown under these new influences and through his life-long habit of study and reading. Busy man as he was, building up, and for a long time single-handed, his wonderful business, he always found time to read, and of the best literature. Compelled as he was by his calling to read new books, his love and interest were always for those that had inspired and fertilised his mind when young. His youthful enthusiasms for Carlyle and Coleridge, for Shakespeare, Burns, Shelley, Wordsworth, Tennyson, never changed or faded. He was specially devoted to Plato, though he could read him only in translation, and knew *THE REPUBLIC* through Davies and Vaughan's translation, better than many who could read the original. He had mastered the leading English prose Classics, and they formed for him a secret standard and criterion of excellence which saved him in a remarkable way from false admirations, or from being deceived by that specious mediocrity which is perpetually appearing in fresh shapes above the horizon. A life-long enthusiasm for the best models was at the root of his highest success as a publisher. Con-

sidering his antecedents and upbringing in the severe simplicity of Scottish humble life, I was always amazed at this faculty of his in discerning excellence in books even on subjects about which he could have known little and cared less. He seemed to have an instinctive perception of what constituted excellence in a new book, irrespective of his own sympathies. I do not suppose he would ever have made an infallible critic, in the literary sense of the word. The deficiencies of his earlier training forbade it. He had not the full equipment of a critic. But intellectual insight seems to be given to some men in ways and through channels other than those of the critic whose judgment has been formed by the careful measuring of writer against writer. Alexander Macmillan's power may have been instinctive, mysterious even to himself; but the intellectual grasp he undoubtedly possessed, and the early successes of the firm, especially at the time when he was his own "reader," must have been due to his almost unerring perception of the real quality of a new writer. His own early reading, as I have said, may have been deep rather than wide; but he knew by heart the authors he dearly loved, and they had formed for him the principles on which he judged. I well remember taking a Sunday walk with him at Cambridge in the first few months of our friendship, and his repeating from memory the then little-known stanzas of Tennyson addressed to Bulwer Lytton that had appeared in *PUNCH*. The verses were quite new to me, and as he delivered them in those chant-like tones his friends remember so well, I can recall the emotion with which he declaimed the noble lines:

An artist, Sir, should rest in Art,  
And waive a little of his claim.  
To have the deep poetic heart  
Is more than all poetic fame.



It might be truly said of Alexander Macmillan that with all his literary instinct, and consequent sagacity, he had that rarer thing, the deep literary heart; and no man ever more clearly understood the essential distinction between literature and books.

The life of Alexander Macmillan down to the year 1857 was practically written by Judge Hughes, for the fortunes of the two brothers had run so parallel that to write of one was to write of both. And one could heartily wish that the life of Alexander from 1857 onward might be continued by the same genial and accomplished hand. There would be many outside his own family to contribute to it. He had the faculty of making and keeping friends, to whom his house was often as a second home, and who could testify to qualities often unknown save to near relations. No one could share his hospitality and sojourn under his roof without discovering the large nature of the man, his generosity, his kindness and thoughtfulness for servants and dependents, his pity and helpfulness for all of them when in trouble. The recollection of his own early poverty and struggle seemed a perpetual fountain of sympathy within him. And it had the natural and happy result of evoking in return the intensest loyalty and affection from all who served him, whether in his home or in his business. Thus it was, too, that he secured an extraordinary influence over their characters, stimulating and bringing out the best that was in them. Abundant evidence, moreover, has been forthcoming since his death, and from some quite unexpected quarters, of kindness and helpfulness to beginners in literature or science, men or women who have since attained to fame and position, shown at a season when such encouragement is absolutely invaluable.

Doubtless, like most men worth

anything, he had some of the defects of his qualities. Enthusiasm, a passionate belief in the writers he loved, quickness of perception, and shrewdness of judgment had their corresponding side of impatience and intolerance of opposition. But his heat in argument was never but for the moment, and no one ever lived less capable of bearing a grudge. Judge Hughes, in his memoir of the elder brother, relates how Daniel in his last hours warned his wife that she would see something of the best of him come out in his children. "It will be a great comfort to you," he added, "but you will see the impetuosity." This impetuosity was characteristic no less of Alexander, and indeed was manifest in all he did and felt, in his dislikes as well as his likings. But it was the outcome of all that was greatest in the man, of his inherited Puritan hatred of gossip or scandal, of all that is mean or underhand, as well as of his lifelong loyalty and affection to his friends. And just for this reason there should not be forgotten, in this connection, the sunny and playful sides of Alexander Macmillan's character: his hospitality, and delight in welcoming his friends and his children's friends; his fondness for music, especially the old songs of his native country (he had a good voice and ear in his prime, and loved a chance of singing ANNIE LAURIE, or THE BONNY HOUSE OF AIRLIE); and his love of the country and the garden and all rural sights and sounds.

In the obituary notices of Mr. Macmillan, recently published, due mention has been made of the remarkable list of writers who either made their first reputation with him for their publisher, or were (like Kingsley and Tennyson) closely associated with the firm for many years. A curious testimony to the fact exists in a relic connected with the founding of this

magazine. As we all know, Alexander Macmillan was the first to project a shilling magazine in place of the old quarterlies at five shillings and magazines at half-a-crown. The new venture was made in the autumn of 1859, soon after the establishment of the London business in Henrietta Street, with Professor Masson as the first editor. A name for the new periodical was a long time under consideration. Tennyson's *IDYLLS OF THE KING* (the first volume) was then fresh in men's memory and admiration, and a title, in some way arising out of the *IDYLLS* was seriously contemplated. *KING ARTHUR* and *THE ROUND TABLE* were two suggested, and one or the other was very nearly adopted. The present writer well remembers being one of a party of friends of the firm assembled in Henrietta Street on the evening when Professor Masson's counsel was finally accepted that the periodical should bear only the name of its founder. A trace of the original suggestions is still to be seen in the design on the cover, where "the blameless King" appears in the centre medallion at the top, the other three completing the design being Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton.

Yet one other trace of the original idea lives in the round table, of English oak, at which friends and supporters of the magazine and many others met, for several years that followed, once a week for social chat in Henrietta Street; and on the edge of the table were inscribed from time to time in their own handwriting the names of the many and varied guests that sat around its board. The catalogue is one of remarkable interest, as showing how comparatively early in the history of the firm the

most distinguished thinkers and writers of that day had become its supporters. The list includes, among many others, Tennyson and Frederick Maurice; Huxley and Herbert Spencer; Llewelyn Davies and Blakesley; G. S. Venables and F. Lushington; Coventry Patmore and John Stuart Blackie; Edward Dicey and Francis Palgrave; F. G. Stephens and William Allingham; Thomas Hughes and Richard Garnett.

Thirty-five years later there was gathered round the grave of Alexander Macmillan, in the beautiful churchyard of Bramshott, near his country home, a group of friends no less distinguished and representative. Men of eminence in science, literature, and scholarship were there, but also, what it would have pleased him more to know, old friends of his schooldays, class-fellows at Irvine; relatives and friends to whom he had been kind when they were young, many travelling long distances to be present; and his own servants and fellow-workers from Bedford Street, who had followed the fortunes of the firm and partaken of its prosperity. The business ties and relationships represented were remarkable; but far more noteworthy, as it seemed to the present writer, was the dominance of sympathies which threw all else into the shade, the bond of strong personal gratitude and affection between Alexander Macmillan and men and women of the most varied and opposite characters and pursuits. Seldom had we known a friend more "pure of heart"; and the happiness of that condition and its power to make others happy were never made more manifest than in the common emotion that stirred the mourners on that day.

A. A.

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

APRIL, 1896.

STEPHANIE DE LIANCOURT.

## I.

THE castle of Carrigadroghid occupies a unique position, being built upon a rocky ledge rising from the bed of the Lee which winds past through a typical Munster scene. I should never have beheld its squared stone chimneys or dismantled gable-ends if a chance journey to southern Ireland had not resulted in a meeting with my old friend Bob Speedwell, who insisted on my spending a few days at a cottage he was then renting near this lovely and secluded spot.

The first day of my visit passed agreeably with rod and creel, but on our return to Fern Lodge a letter awaited my friend which, he explained, would detain him in the neighbouring town of Macroom for some hours next day. Desirous of saving Mrs. Speedwell the task of entertaining me and keeping an eye to the devastations of a clumsy girl who burlesqued the duties of a cook, I volunteered to accompany Bob on his drive and try my luck back along the Lee.

Accordingly, after an early breakfast next morning, we set off through the fresh air, riotous with the song of the larks, to a point close upon the bridge approaching the village of Macroom, where we parted. "Good luck, old fellow," said Bob. "I'll be back

before dinner. Try the black gnat I tied yesterday, and don't delude all the fishes clean out of the water by showing them those London beauties of yours ;" my cheery friend holding the tinselled contents of my fly-book in the utmost contempt, as delusions and snares for the sportsman alone.

There had been promise of a cloudy day when we started, but before I had thrown the first cast the sun was blazing in the intense blue of an Irish sky. The sport was not so good as on the previous day and my interest in it soon waned ; but I consoled myself with the reflection that few unsuccessful anglers are blessed with such scenery. It was close on noon when I caught sight of the gables of Carrigadroghid again. Leisurely reeling up my line, I determined to halt here and while away an hour beside this grim relic of the old strenuous times of siege and foray. Unjointing my rod, I flung myself upon a bank connected by an isthmus of sand with the island on which the castle stands, and leaned back, my hat over my eyes, trying to reconstruct the past from the legends Bob Speedwell had gathered among the peasantry round : how it was built to satisfy the caprice of some dead and gone Una O'Carroll ; how Broghill besieged it, hanging Egan, the Bishop of Ross, before the

walls, because he urged the defenders against surrender ; and how, finally, "the fellow in the laced coat" took it by the stale device of trundling up mock cannon under the noses of its astute garrison. Poor old tower, how sturdily it still stood above the careless water that mirrored its ruin now as once it mirrored its glory, the battlements gone, the window, whence Una's lovely face looked forth in the dim long ago on grazing kine and swelling pasture, a fissure in the battered wall ! We English are not a sentimental folk ; but I think that for a moment the pathetic desolation of those fire-blackened stones, which had known so many human joys and human sorrows, impressed me more deeply than it is ever likely to impress even those who probably were descendants of the men who once held sway here ; a country lad cleaning his master's cart hard by, or a slouching untidy matron lounging down the bank for water, her black hair tumbling about her ears, her new wedding-ring glittering in the sunlight as she swung her brazen pail.

With the intention of examining the place more closely I rose and sauntered across to the bridge, half ancient, half modern, where the narrow past and wider present seem to meet before the postern opening on it from the castle. This entrance was, however, barred by a rude door covered with weather-stained advertisements, but so rickety that pushing it aside a little I was able to look beyond. There was not much to see ; only a floor cumbered by a fallen roof, a portion of a broken stairway up the wall, and a pencil of light striking in through a half-blocked window. I looked at my watch and was turning away to seek some fresh distraction, when I found myself face to face with a lady who evidently had crossed the

bridge from the opposite side, and had come quite close before I was aware of her presence. Involuntarily stepping back that she might go by, I lifted my hat and was about to pass on, reluctantly, for the face she turned to me was, and is still to my thinking, the most beautiful I ever beheld. Instead of advancing she paused and said, with bird-like flutter in her voice : "Pardon me, sir, but the door, is it open ?"

I regretted to say that it was not.

"Ah, how unfortunate !" She spoke English with a decidedly French accent, making a little gesture of disappointment.

"If we inquire at those cabins," I said after an awkward interval, during which I resumed my hat, "we should get some information about the place, though there is not much to be seen. The whole building is dilapidated ; the floor seems covered with rubbish."

She nodded, and then turning back, we walked together towards the few houses built near the angle formed by the intersection of the road over the bridge with that leading to Macroon. "I trust," observed the lady, "that I do not trouble you ; but I wish to see the interior so much."

I assured her that it was no inconvenience, inwardly blessing the fate which had thrown such a diversion in my way, while I devoutly hoped she was not one of a party, and instinctively glanced round across the bridge fearing to see the ubiquitous car and its attendant driver. "I came from over the hill," said the lady, interpreting my look.

"From Coachford ?" I observed, proud of my local knowledge.

She smiled : "Oh, no, a little beyond it."

We had now reached one of the houses and in answer to my inquiries were directed to another where the key of the castle was kept. After a

characteristic delay, the custodian, an old woman, was found, and under her guidance we retraced our steps, my companion glancing around her on every side, and talking of the various objects which met her eye; now it was the increase of the ivy on one of the northern gables, now the size of some ash-stems which leaped from the midmost buttress of the bridge. "They are quite great trees now," she said; "and yet, if you were to have seen what little twigs they were once!"

"Their growth must have been very rapid of late years," I ventured, looking down over the parapet.

"Oh, no," she replied, laughing deliciously, "quite the contrary, I think."

I was surprised into staring at her, but youth was instinct in every movement. Her figure was about the middle height and admirably proportioned, with perhaps a slight inclination to plumpness; her dress too, as well as I can recollect, was quite fashionable, being in the prevailing mode called Directorate. I had seen just such another gown on Mrs. Speedwell the previous evening.

The old woman who had hobbled on before us opened the door and stood waiting. Entering we found ourselves in an irregular enclosure about thirty feet each way. The lady ceased speaking, and crossing the threshold with a quick, assured step, looked about her, a lovely figure in the subdued light. She went to an angle formed by the walls immediately facing the river, and peered upward. "Ah," she cried, "how it goes, year by year, and gives no sign, until some fine morning, crash, it all comes down! That is the way of ruins; they seem always the same till one day comes a storm and, *pouf*, your old castle disappears. The steps are gone that used to be here," she continued, glancing along the wall.

"Look, you can see their impressions yet in the mortar; but there are a few remaining near that narrow little window where the light comes in. The view from it must be very pretty." She pointed to a lancet-shaped slit in the wall perhaps fourteen feet above our heads.

"Och, sure, miss, if ye'd like we could get a ladder," observed the guardian readily. "There's one convenient at Jerry Downey's." The lady thanked her with a bright smile and came to the door. "I will get it," I volunteered, starting forward. "Oh, no, sir, sure he'll bring it himself; I'll go meself an' tell him," replied the woman, and she limped away, the other thanking her again with a graceful condescension quite different from her manner towards me. Then going to one of the lower windows, she gazed out upon the even flow of the Lee. "How unchanging it is!" she said after a pause. "Nothing seems to matter; *tout lasse, tout passe, tout casse*. Look at the great white cows standing in the water as if it was only yesterday. You are a philosopher, sir; it is the fashion," she added, turning to me with an easy imperious confidence which I have omitted to say lay behind all the suavity of her manner. "Can you tell me what is Time?"

Now I am a plain man, without any predilection for philosophical discussions, which honestly I consider a waste of breath; for prove what you will, annihilate your adversary as you may, the question in dispute remains much the same as before. It is like shooting at the moon with an eighty-ton gun; you raise a dust, make a stir, and end by leaving the moon where you found her—in the air. Besides, beautiful as my chance acquaintance was, I did not relish being catechised in the half negligent tone she assumed. Accordingly I



answered a little stiffly, that my time had been too much taken up by the practical affairs of life to leave me any wide margin for inquiring into its nature. "And I have been given to understand, madam," I concluded, "that the efforts of those who have devoted their lives to such studies have not been crowned by any tangible success."

"Ah, I see," she rejoined gaily, casting a fragment of mortar into the river. "*Le raisonnement en bannit la raison.* You are practical, like your great nation; an Englishman I presume? Yes, I thought so from the first; you have a more erect air than the people about here. They look conquered. Well, so they are and so they deserve to remain; though still, they came very near shaking you off once, but fate and the wind fought for you—ah, here they come!"

She ceased as we heard footsteps approaching, and presently the old woman reappeared accompanied by a man carrying a ladder. This being raised against the wall, not without much discussion and gesticulation, my companion mounted swiftly and looked out through the window I mentioned; then she descended, had the ladder shifted to another place, and examined the walls themselves here and there as if to test their solidity, taking up a new position some minutes after, moving from point to point with what appeared to me the aimless curiosity of the sight-seer. I had at first offered to hold the ladder, and now continued to do so, as well as assist in carrying it to the spots she indicated; while the woman and the man watched us, a deferential smile on their lips which nothing but what I must call the native good breeding of the Irish could have restrained from breaking into a grin, as the lady prosecuted her search, and I, shamefacedly

enough, no doubt, played second fiddle; for I think a man always looks foolish obeying the behests of a woman when he does not clearly understand what she is about. In this case too there was really little need for holding the ladder; it was short enough and there was no danger of a serious fall. I had not the faintest idea of what she meant by acting thus; and although she was undeniably very bewitching I began to think of a decent excuse to get out of my rather ridiculous position. For the second or third time she had the ladder brought back under the window she had observed first; and she was in the act of descending when she uttered a little, low cry, stopped short and glanced down over her shoulder. I looked up, one hand on the ladder, the other holding my watch; then she burst into a very genuine laugh. "A thousand pardons, sir," she exclaimed in French. "I have been extremely selfish; pray forgive me!"

I had once stayed for some weeks in Paris, and, guessing at her meaning, assured her in my best French that it was of no matter; and had it been my busiest day instead of my idlest, I should have said the same, for a lovelier face, especially when she smiled, no woman ever lifted in the sunlight. She laughed again, and began to pick hastily at some stones directly under the embrasure of the window, muttering to herself in rapid, disjointed words, and then said aloud: "This is very stiff, lend me your sword. Oh, I forget, excuse me." She looked round again and added, still in French, "That woman yonder is watching me; make her go away for a few moments." She was imperious now and much agitated. I left the ladder, and addressing the woman drew her outside with some trivial inquiries concerning the ex-

terior of the building. I kept her occupied thus some minutes, fully conscious that she was scrutinising me keenly, though at the time I could not guess why. She had those piercing, intelligent eyes one often meets among the older women of the Irish peasantry, and I had noted too that, although her manner was deferential, she had not the abashed bearing of the "bhoy" in the presence of his superiors.

After a short pause the lady came to the postern and called to me, still speaking French: "Sir, you are really too kind, but there is something here, a,—a *souvenir*, I wish to take away, but it is so tightly wedged between the stones I cannot get it out. I do not wish this woman to know, and if I had a knife, broad-bladed, I could extract it myself; no, not that," as I produced my penknife; "it would break. How unfortunate! What o'clock is it?" I told her, she actually stamped her foot with impatience.

Suddenly a bright thought struck me. "I have a fishing-rod," I said. "It is on the bank, quite near; I will go and fetch it." I would have hurried away, but she cried out in almost agonised tones, "No, no, do not leave me; send the woman." Much mystified, I turned to our guide and told her where to find the rod; but catching sight of the man who had brought the ladder crossing the road, I shouted my directions to him, for I was ashamed to send an old woman on such an errand. Together we re-entered the castle, the lady apologising in English for the trouble she gave and questioning the woman about the different families in the immediate neighbourhood. She mentioned one name I had heard of the evening before; its owner was an acquaintance of Bob, a wonderful traveller, he had said, and rarely at home.

"Do they live here still?" asked the lady.

"Indeed they do, ma'am," replied the other; "an' they're here now many and many a long day, an' good people they are too."

"What is the Christian name of the present man?"

"Stephen, ma'am, or, I should say, miss."

"Ah, indeed, the old one," continued the lady unheeding. "Strange" she added, turning to me, "how names are handed down from father to son. That name has been in the family, I dare swear, for more than a hundred years. They live at Hauteville?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"The present man, is he married?"

"Och, no, ma'am, he's young yet; he's always travelling, though he's at home now. I see him goin' to Macroom an hour ago."

"Does he keep many servants?"

"Wisha, no, only a cook an' the parlour-maid, an' she's sick down with her mother in the village. 'Tis a fine life they have; nothing to do but look after the house, an' everything provided, not as if they were on board-wages. I suppose you know the family, ma'am?"

"Yes," said the lady, "I know the family."

Jerry had now returned with the rod, and taking it I offered to dig out the object of her search, some variety of lichen or fern as I imagined. She thanked me graciously though she did not accept my assistance; then quickly mounting the ladder and rapidly loosening with the spike of my rod a few moss-covered stones which fell clattering to my feet, I saw her pause, look round a second, and swiftly take a small packet from the slight cavity thus revealed. She lingered a little while and then descended, holding a spray of a small, fern-like plant, exclaiming with an air of triumph: "See,

I have got it; the *asplenium trichomanes*! A very good specimen too."

As we stepped out upon the bridge again a few drops of rain touched our faces; the sun was hidden by a passing cloud. The old woman, who seemed to be telling her beads under her apron, now approached us, and seeing that my companion made no motion to her pocket, I gave her a little gratuity for herself and the man who had shambled back to work. The lady had turned away over the bridge and signalled me to follow her by a slight beck, while with a wave of her hand she bade farewell to the woman. To my astonishment, however, the latter, instead of locking the door, darted past me and approaching her uttered some guttural words in Irish. A shadow of deep displeasure crossed the lady's haughty face, but nevertheless she answered in what, I presume, was also Irish. Then followed an almost whispered colloquy, the lady moving backward slowly as if she wished to be as brief as possible, and holding a finger to her lips when she was not speaking.

Feeling a little awkward, I walked on, adjusting my rod, and in a moment my companion was at my side.

"You must come and have some refreshment," she said cordially. "What a strange old place that is! I know every stone in the walls. Come this way, so, over the stile, *merci*! We shall soon find shelter, though there is little need; the rain will soon pass off. Look, is not that lovely?"

We were on high ground now and she pointed to the scene below, lit by the sun as he poured his beams athwart the falling rain until it resembled a shower of gold. "Ah," she said, drawing a deep breath, "I have often beguiled many a weary hour here; it reminded me of the Loire, the blue slates on the houses. It is an unfortunate country, sir, is it not?

Beautiful in spite of its history, and its people. You English have drained its very life-blood."

"On the contrary, madam," I replied a little stiffly, "we have lost more than we have gained by our connection with the island; ever since the Union we have had more trouble than profit by it."

"Excellent!" she cried, lifting her eyebrows, and showing her small, white teeth, but rather as if she were applauding a bit of good acting than approving a sentiment. "The Union," she went on, "ah, yes, it was in the air a long time; you have no one like Mr. Pitt now, I fancy. Oh, it was well planned! Do the Irish plot to bring the French here still, and stone them when they come?"

I laughed outright. "There is no chance of that," I answered; "the ports are too well guarded. But the people have all reasonable liberty; they can leave the country if they choose, and are doing so in droves."

"Then they never fight now?"

"Only, as usual, among themselves; our soldiers are frequently engaged in keeping their rival factions asunder. But to fight with us would be madness; we have thirty thousand men in the place, besides the police, Irishmen too."

"Thirty thousand men!" she echoed. "And General Bonaparte had little more to conquer Piedmont and Lombardy! I begin to respect those people again." She put her finger to her lips and walked on. "Ah, I see now," she continued; "your method is better than the old plan of massacring them at intervals. You squeeze the country gradually, as they say the boa-constrictor squeezes his prey; at first the victim struggles, but soon it is all over. Yes, the modern way is better; it is quieter, and that is a great gain."

Now I am, I hope, a perfectly fair, open-minded man: I am accustomed

to meet people of varying views and discuss their opinions, even when opposed to my own, in a spirit of toleration ; but I confess to have been unprepared for such astounding ignorance or prejudice. I knew, moreover, something of the methods employed to foment patriotic agitation in the most distressful country, and I had scarcely patience to add politely : "I fear, madam, your sympathies have been imposed upon ; you have not, evidently, seen our side of the question."

She shook her head with an airy laugh that dissolved my momentary irritation. "Ah, sir, but I have seen your side of the question. I have had excellent opportunities of judging for myself ; you cannot have changed much since,—*Allons !* We are arrived."

She pointed to a small country house close at hand, snugly ensconced in a grove which protected it on the north. "Come in, and allow me to offer you a little hospitality ; it is the least I can do in return for all your patience and courtesy."

As she spoke we skirted a low wall tipped by laurels, and passing through a swing gate, found ourselves on a gravel path leading up to the door between the box-edged borders of an old-fashioned garden glowing with roses that lifted their beauty to the sun and breathed forth their perfume, as if in thanksgiving for the sweet shower that had starred their petals and sunk, cool and refreshing, to their roots. My companion paused a moment, drawing a deep sigh, so profound, so utterly pitiful, that I pray God I may never hear the like again. A richly-tinted clump of columbine detained her a moment, as she gathered a handful of its fantastic flowers. Then, running lightly up the steps before the door standing hospitably open, she bade me welcome to Hauteville.

"There need be no ceremony," she said, as we ascended the stairs ; "I know the ways of the place, as the Irish say." On the first landing, however, she paused irresolutely between two doors at right angles, and then impulsively opened one, entering the room it led into with a step which grew more assured as she advanced. The apartment was bright, cheerful, and comfortably furnished, though in a bygone fashion. Motioning me to a seat, she walked round the room, daintily touching a table here, a chair there, opening a cabinet or other knick-knack, uttering every now and then little exclamations of surprise and interest just as she had done in the ruin ; then checking herself, she approached the chimney-piece where, among other things, was a silver bell. This she rang impatiently, I thought afterwards, and, with an apology to me, seated herself at a little recess near one of the windows.

Presently we heard steps on the stair outside and a fat, round-eyed girl made her appearance.

"Ah, here you come at last," said my companion. "Why did you not go to the door when we arrived ?"

"Sure, I didn't know you were here at all, ma'am," replied the abigail, evidently impressed by her interlocutor's authoritative manner. "I was in the kitchen."

"But that is just near the stairs."

"Oh, law, no, ma'am ; it's at the top of the house indeed, ma'am."

My hostess made a little gesture of impatience. "That is Mr. Stephen's doing ?" she asked.

"Yes, ma'am, he had it put there a year ago."

"Well, he is master and can do as he wills. Are you engaged here ?"

"No, ma'am, I'm only takin' care of the house ; I go away at night."

"Your master is in Macroom ?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"So, now get us something to eat. I am Lady ——," she mentioned the family name. "But where is the cook?"

"Oh, the cook is in Cork, ma'am, but she'll be back soon; she left the keys out, for fear anybody would call."

The girl jerked the words out automatically and then stood staring straight before her. The lady shrugged her shoulders. "I comprehend," she said slowly. "Stay, I will go with you and get what I want; I know where it should be. Pardon, sir, a moment."

She vanished with the girl, and, leaning back in my chair, I suffered my eyes to wander over the room. It was spacious, and must have run the entire length of the house. Its windows, enlarged and modernised, contrasted very favourably with the low, many-paned variety I noted in other parts of the establishment. The paintings which adorned it were mostly time-worn. Over the fireplace hung a spirited portrait of a full-blooded gentleman, dressed in the fashion of the eighteenth century. Time had cracked the scarlet of his coat and dimmed the light in his leering eyes; but the energy and distinction of his attitude, and the bold contour of the features, showed that in his day he must have been a bustling man of action, who probably, as occasion served, had hacked or intrigued his way to power among the mere Irishry. Near this picture was an unfinished sketch of a bridge by Canaletto, while here and there were other paintings, some poor, some passable, of ladies in sacks and fur-belowes. At my elbow was a portfolio containing some excellent photographic views which I had begun to examine idly, when a light step and the jingling of glasses caused me to look up; my hostess had returned,

bearing a tray with the materials of a tempting lunch upon it. In answer to my uncontrollable look of surprise, she said laughing: "I dared not trust those glasses to that clumsy girl; they are heirlooms; besides, I do not think she is accustomed to waiting on people, and I would prefer that we were *tête-à-tête*."

She had by this time, with my assistance, wheeled a little table near the window, and leaving me to arrange the tray, shut the door noiselessly. She paused too, I could see, before a small mirror to take off her great hat and pass her hand over her abundant hair, humming lightly as she did so. Then she took a chair, filled me out some wine, and poured a little for herself into a tapering glass which I was connoisseur enough to know must have been well-nigh priceless, so cunningly blended were its rainbow hues. She pressed me to eat and drink with the frank cordiality of a great lady who wishes to be gracious without becoming familiar, and kept up a conversation that sparkled like champagne in its flow of epigram and anecdote, though unfortunately I cannot recall a word of it now. Her own lunch, I could see, was, however, a mere pretence; and she watched me, in spite of all her courtesy, with the air of one who longs to speak on a subject lying near the heart. Seeing this, I gradually slackened my gastronomic efforts, though not without a slight regret, for the lunch was really excellent and deserved every consideration.

As I filled a second glass and leaned back, she said: "I see there is no clock here; would you kindly lay your watch upon the table? I have something to say and to do." I did as she asked, and sat watching her, inwardly wondering what would come next. She bent her face above the watch a few moments and then raised



it to mine, her wondrous eyes filled with a pitiful look of entreaty that cut me to the heart. "Madam," I said, speaking slowly, for I feared the wine had mounted to my head, "I shall be only too happy to be of any service."

She bowed as if she had been waiting for the words, and replied: "You can, undoubtedly, sir, and what I require is not arduous."

I was younger then and more romantic than I am now, but I shall never repent of what I did; one hand lay on the table near my watch; I raised and kissed it. She looked at me with a slow puzzling smile that stole from mouth to eye; then she sighed again and glanced behind at the portrait over the mantelpiece. For a moment she seemed lost in thought, but, rousing herself, she drew from her breast the object I had seen her secrete there in the castle. It resembled nothing so much as a very small cartridge-case, and was evidently very old, the lacquered leather coming asunder in flakes around the corroded silver ornaments that once had adorned it. My companion examined the box carefully and then began to open it. The task did not prove an easy one; but at length, by passing a knife, at my suggestion, round the edges of the flap which had been ground and welded into the opposite side, she laid it open, and with the air of one who knows what to expect took out a packet wrapped in mouldering paper. This last broke away, and revealed within some closely folded parchment now yellow through time and exposure to damp.

I watched her with growing interest as she pushed aside the glasses and spread the document open upon the table, a document which seemed with its dim, quaint lettering and formal flourishes a legal instrument of some sort. The lady seemed, however, to find no difficulty in reading it, and

when she had finished nodded her dainty head two or three times at the writing, as if it were the face of an old friend. "So!" she said. "It is just as you left it, *mon ami*, only a little time-worn and a little late in the day." Then she raised her head eagerly as if recollecting my presence. "Sir," she cried, "you offered me your service a while ago; well, this is what I require of you; it is not very exacting. I wish you," raising the document, "to post this deed to an address, which I shall give you, in the town of Cork. I may not do so myself, and no one but you can help me. Say, will you do it?"

She spoke so eagerly and with such intense earnestness that I readily assented, though with a secret misgiving as to my companion's sanity. She sank back in her chair. "I thank you, sir," she replied, "and confide fully in the promise you have given me."

"It is a little thing, madam," I remarked when I had again pledged myself to act as she desired.

She shook her head. "There is nothing little in this life, sir," she answered. "That little thing of which you speak so lightly has been waiting nigh one hundred years to be accomplished." I felt my brain turning as she gazed upon me with those unfathomable eyes of hers. "What is it your English poet says?"

There are more things in Heaven and  
earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamed of in your philosophy."

She rose, and, going to a desk standing open by one of the windows, began tranquilly to search it, while I, having received a glance of permission, endeavoured to decipher the crabbed writing and legal terms of the weather-stained relic on the table. I could understand that it was a deed of gift of some lands in the

barony of East Muskerry to one Sir Patrick O'Brien, having been made and provided so that the decree of outlawry against him should be revoked according to His Majesty's pleasure. Furthermore, the said Sir Patrick O'Brien was desired to place, or to cause this document to be placed in the hands of two solicitors in Cork on or before a certain date therein specified. If this were not done, the property would once more revert to the Crown.

I had barely finished perusing the deed when the lady returned bearing a large envelope. Taking the document she folded it carefully in its narrow box, enclosing both in the stout linen-lined paper. Then, putting writing materials before me, she bade me address it to two names in a certain street in Cork. When I had finished, she took my watch from the table and sank, with what was almost a groan, into a chair by the window. "I have little time to spend with you, sir," she said, "but enough to explain to you, so far as explanation is necessary, my conduct to-day. I ask your attention to what I am about to say, but first take possession of that envelope; it will be more secure." I did as she requested, and drew my chair near hers. Then she began the following narrative, looking alternately at the watch and the lovely scene which lay spread before the window.

"You saw by the date of that deed that it is nearly one hundred years old; and you have, I presume, seen the name in whose favour it has been drawn?" I bowed. "This gentleman," she continued, "belonged to the French forces, and those lands which are given him there were the mere wreck of a splendid patrimony lost by his ancestors through devotion to the Stuarts. Well, while invalided in Paris owing to a wound received during the campaign under

Dumouriez in Belgium, this same Sir Patrick O'Brien was presented to a French lady, Stephanie de Liancourt. He soon professed a passionate attachment to her, which she returned, being then young, innocent, credulous, and confiding. It was the year of Jemmapes. The gentleman was still young but poor, and the lady, who had been left mistress of herself at too early an age, assisted him frequently with money. It is an old story. Her lover proved faithless, or she believed he did; and, having obtained a command in the new army of Italy, he departed quite suddenly from Paris to push his fortunes under General Bonaparte.

"With her heart hardened and her soul humiliated, this jilted girl faced the world. She disdained to pursue her lover with complaints or entreaties; indeed, being passably rich, she had many acquaintances who would have gladly become suitors, but she had ceased to believe in love. You can understand that, as she was an aristocrat, she had scant sympathies with the France which had risen on the ruins of the Bastille; and though her possessions were assured to her by those who ruled the destinies of the country, she determined to travel instead of retiring to her estates. Naturally, her thoughts turned to England. While there she met the man who afterwards became her husband. He was ambitious, needy, daring, and, as she found later on, as heartless as she believed herself to be. Being essentially a man of affairs, he soon gained her confidence by his judicious advice regarding her French estates, which she finally sold, and having married him she came to live in this very place.

"There never was perhaps a stranger marriage; there were no illusions on either side; there was no love. The result was natural. Both went their several ways: the man sought

power and rank, the twin deities of his soul ; and the woman endeavoured to forget in insipid amusements the thoughts which burned in hers. You will admit it was not an enviable life.

“Well, as the years went by that woman’s heart grew harder still. A dull, unreasoning hate rose up within her against the man whose summer love had brought her to this miserable plight, and she vowed revenge if ever occasion offered. Alas, Fate ordained that they should meet again.

“One day she received an urgent letter beseeching her to grant an assignation to an old friend at a certain place in the neighbourhood. She recognised the handwriting ; it was his, and you can comprehend with what warring emotions she gave consent. They met at the appointed spot and looked once more into each other’s eyes. They did not speak of love, though he with incredible folly, or impudence as she thought, alluded to the past and conjured her to help him by its memory, adding excuses and explanations of which she then took no account. It seemed he had, through some signal service rendered while abroad to a relative of Mr. Pitt, obtained a pardon for former misdeeds and the assurance of the undisturbed enjoyment of certain lands yet remaining to the Crown as gifts ; the conditions being, however, that the document authorising this should be lodged before a specified day in Cork with two gentlemen who had been commissioned to receive it. Unfortunately, he compromised himself in the meantime by killing, at a chance encounter, a gentleman of position in the county, and therefore dared not enter the city until the affair should be adjusted. His prayer was that, as time pressed and the matter was so important, she should place the deed you see there in the hands of those solicitors.”

The lady drew a long breath, looked at the watch again, and resumed in what I thought was a weaker voice.

“What would you have ? It was a man pleading to a woman he had wronged, to a woman whose heart had grown as hard as a nether millstone. She promised, but never meant to keep her word. They parted then,—for ever. What became of him she knew not, but the deed remained where he had put it, where she knew he had hidden it lest it might be lost or destroyed in case of his arrest, until to-day. She went on with the old life, and the years passed ; but gradually a pitiless longing, a hopeless regret took the place of gratified hatred. She began now to believe the explanations O’Brien had given at their last meeting of his seeming abandonment of her, though at the time she had deemed them clever lies ; and the remembrance that now it was too late for reparation embittered still more her joyless days. Think of it, sir ! Remorse gnawed hourly at her heart ; she had no guiding star of love or faith to light the way ; she had no place in her little world, and youth itself was departing ! Let me be brief ; in desperation she ended all one wild night from the parapet of Carrigadroghid bridge.”

The reciter paused again and turned the watch listlessly in her hand.

“That is a long time ago now, but it seems as if it were only yesterday. The distance between the bridge and the water is not great, and it was less then than at other times, for the river was swollen by recent rains ; but before she reached the yellow flood she had repented, and she fought for life. Her struggle was vain, but not her repentance. *Inter pontem et fontem misericordia Domini !* Next morning her body was found on some rocks not far distant, where even in

summer the river chafes in its narrow bed. Her husband gave it a magnificent funeral, and quickly married another wife. It is no matter. This day she was permitted to revisit the scene of her crime, and ease her tortured soul by carrying out the directions of him whom she had so basely betrayed. This could not be done without human assistance. Twice before in the century she attempted the task, but failed; to-day she has been successful, thanks to you. Yes, sir; Stephanie de Liancourt, the woman who has been nigh one hundred years dead and buried, speaks to you now and thanks you with the gratitude which only those can feel who may no longer help themselves."

Involuntarily I sprang to my feet; was she mad or was I? There she stood before me, a living, breathing woman, instinct with all that gracious loveliness which I have tried to describe. Never in all my waking hours have I seen, or shall I see anything so fair, so lovable again; a gift from the gods to the hearth and the home of the man who could win her; and yet she was no longer of this world! I strove to speak, but my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth. She approached and handed me my watch, for she had risen also. I took it mechanically. "Do not try to speak, sir," she said gently; "I understand." Nevertheless I forced some words from between my lips, what they were I cannot remember. She smiled, a tender pity in her unfathomable eyes, and held out her hand. "Adieu, sir," she murmured; "we must part now; but not for ever," she added, reading my thoughts, and an indescribable light coming over her face. "We shall meet again before you have said your last word to your King." I bent above the dainty hand, and then impelled by a resistless impulse moved

away. At the door, however, I dared to turn and look back; yes, there she still stood under the red-coated portrait, one finger on her lip and the light upon her face!

I groped my way down the stairs like a drunken man, and it was not until I reached the open air that I recovered my mental equilibrium. My fishing-rod was in my hand, but I had no recollection of taking it from the stand in the hall; my hat was on my head, but I did not remember putting it there. My watch showed me that the luncheon-hour at my friend's house was past. I felt in my pocket and drawing out the envelope I had received in such strange circumstances, determined to post it immediately, just as if it had been a matter of ordinary experience. Accordingly I trudged off to Coachford and there forwarded it to the given address, getting back in time for dinner.

## II

WHEN I rejoined my friends I found that Mrs. Speedwell had been busy all day long with a sickly child, and that possibly she did not resent my absence from lunch, while Bob himself had only just returned. Instinctively I endeavoured to banish the memory of my adventure by chatting with him over our after-dinner cigars on the topics of the hour; but fate seemed unpropitious, for the unconscious Bob began to expatiate on the achievements and character of the traveller who lived at Hauteville. "He'll be at home to-morrow," said he, "and you must make his acquaintance. It may be useful to you in many ways; and if you can get him to talk, it will be nearly as good as a tour round the world. I'll pilot you over there to-morrow after breakfast." The conversation then drifted away to other subjects, and I quietly deter-

mined that I would see the matter out and, if possible, probe the mystery to the bottom. Retiring soon after, I slept, contrary to my expectations, the dreamless sleep of exhaustion.

Next morning, disdaining the dog-cart, we strolled down over that bridge which was to me so memorable, taking almost the identical path my strange companion and I had followed the day before. "We'll go round by the road," said my friend; "it will be a little more formal, but there is a short cut across there," he added, indicating the direction with the stem of his pipe, "just by that stile."

Following the road, we skirted the field and plantation I had traversed, and soon found ourselves in front of the house where I had been a guest. Up to that moment I confess to a slight hope that my companion must have meant some other dwelling bearing the name of Hauteville; but no, there was the very place; there were the wicket through which I had passed, the blooming parterres of roses, the hospitable door, and the sunlit hall. As in a dream I followed Bob across the walk and heard him inquire for the owner; as in a dream I followed, when we were ushered into a bright breakfast-room on the ground-floor where the traveller and one or two other men were chatting over the remains of a late but substantial meal. The dogs, that lay here and there upon the skins covering the polished boards, raised their lazy heads to question our entry, but at a word from their master resumed their listless apathy. Bob, who knew the others, was received with a chorus of welcome, and I was presented formally to the company. The conversation which we had interrupted flowed on again, and I was forced to take part in it. They were fluent talkers those country squires, though the matter was not momentous or indeed specially

important. Our host was cosmopolitan and catholic in his tastes; he had touched life at many points, and furthermore had the art of discussing the subject in hand as if it were the only one he cared to converse on. He was still young, and had nothing of the languid affectations of speech or air that marked his companions. His face, remarkable rather than handsome, instantly suggested to me the portrait which I knew hung in the room above. There were the same keen eye, the same energy of attitude. Granting the portrait was that of an ancestor, the hereditary traits, which in the earlier and more troubled days had led the one to power and fortune, could be seen working out now through the love of travel and adventure in the descendant.

After a while the visitors took their departure, loitering along the walk in the brilliant sunshine and whistling to their dogs, our host going with them to the door. When he returned, we lounged by the window, talking of many common acquaintances, until, producing cigars, he proposed we should look over the stables and inspect a new polo-pony. We did so, spending altogether half an hour between them and the out-houses where he had some cows with astounding pedigrees. When we came back the conversation had drifted to painting, and he offered laughingly to show us his picture-gallery. "I keep the few things of value we have up-stairs," he said leading the way; "but you must not expect anything striking; only a few ladies in brocade and the venerated founder of Hauteville. We have got some miniatures, however, which you may care to see."

As I expected, he ushered us into the room where I had lunched on the previous day, and with a laugh pointed out to me the familiar paintings. He was in a gay mood and gave us



many a quaint chapter of family history, as well as cynical character-sketches of the different painted ladies who seemed to frown back upon him from their canvas pillories ; for I could see that his good sense had not guarded him from affecting an indifference towards rank and lineage, even while his manners and his bearing proclaimed the influence of both. He finished his description opposite the gentleman over the fire-place. "Now," he said, putting his hands in his pockets and his head on one side, "there you have as thorough-paced a rascal as the eighteenth century produced. When he was only twenty-three he ran away with a friend's wife, and afterwards ran the friend through in Spring Gardens by way of reparation. He was a bad son and a bad brother ; his one aim in life was his own advancement, and he sacrificed to attain it any principles he ever possessed. He broke faith with friend and foe alike ; he had a heart of stone and a will of steel ; his one virtue was courage, and allied to a brazen, unabashed assurance, it carried him triumphantly through many an awkward place. At the heel of the hunt he died, not on Tyburn, but here, a baronet, rich in lands and honours, the husband in succession of the two loveliest women of their day ; and I dare say he was as faithless to them as he was to everybody else. We had a portrait of the last Lady ——, a relative of Lord Broghill, the man who did Lord Muskerry out of Blarney Castle in the preceding century ; and like the rest of her family she was no fool. She kept a pretty close eye on the baronet, they say, and outlived him in the end. Her picture, however, got damaged irreparably ; but we have a very fair miniature of the first wife. Let's have a look at her."

He turned to a fancifully-carved cabinet, and, unlocking it, drew out a

tray of small, circular leather cases ; these he opened, and displayed a really valuable collection of miniatures from the pencil of more than one famous artist. The subjects were principally dead and gone beauties of the family, some of whom had trodden those very floors, ascended the stair outside, and passed forth one day never to return from their quiet resting-place beneath the elms in the churchyard beyond the hill. "Strange, I cannot find the Frenchwoman here," he said. "God only knows why she married him. There is quite a romance about her : she got drowned one evening in the Lee not many years after her marriage ; and I have a shadowy memory of servants' talk about a ghost that used to haunt Carrigadroghid bridge below, in open daylight. Ah, I remember now ; it's in the desk. I had it out yesterday ; there is something wrong with the clasp."

He approached the writing-desk I had seen the previous day whence my hostess had taken the envelope, and turning on his heel, muttered an oath. "As sure as I stand here, that girl goes to-day," he said addressing us. "Just look at this ! A man cannot leave anything unlocked near their curious paws." Lifting one of the covers, he showed a mass of envelopes and note-paper tossed about in woeful confusion ; but at the top I saw, framed in gold and lying open on the withered sprays of columbine, an exquisitely finished miniature of Stephanie de Liancourt, looking a little more girlish than when I had met her. Repressing his annoyance, our host took up the little painting and pointed out to us its beauties. The artist was, I believe, Fragonard ; and he had caught with wonderful precision the matchless air of distinction I have alluded to, and fixed the radiant smile that must have made her the petted queen of many a *salon*.

"She had an old affair with a former lover, a Rapparee," said Bob's friend, gazing appreciatively on the gracious face, "and used to give him assignations. It is quite probable that she met her fate at his hands."

"Not at all, sir," I cried. "She threw herself from the bridge. There was another lover, but there was nothing dishonourable."

Both men stared at me. "And pray may I ask how you know?" asked our host with a touch of ice in his tones.

"She told me so herself, in this very room, yesterday," I answered.

Neither laughed as I expected. "Indeed?" observed our host with polite interest.

"Yes," I continued, wishing I had not spoken, but unable to keep silence. "Those withered flowers were placed there by her yesterday; I can show you the clump outside where she plucked them. I,—I lunched with her here. I want to say,—I wish you to understand, that of all the women belonging to your family, there was not one purer or more unhappy. Her life was wrecked through a miserable misunderstanding; and whatever her faults have been, she has since expiated them."

My host looked at me thoughtfully and pulled the ears of a favourite setter that had cautiously ventured into this forbidden apartment in our wake.

"I would prefer you laughed," I said lamely.

"I have no desire to do so," he answered. "I have learned enough of the world to know that the improbable, as well as the unexpected, happens."

"Will you do me the favour of calling your servant, and we shall put the matter to rest?"

He stepped backward with a quick stride, and in Irish fashion called, "Hetty, Hetty!"

"Yes, sir," piped a distant voice.

"Come here at once." Steps sounded on the stairs, and the girl who had answered the bell the day before, made her appearance again. I advanced. "This gentleman wishes to speak to you," said her master. The girl turned to me.

"Do you remember," I began with a sinking heart, for her face expressed no recognition, "do you remember that I called here yesterday, accompanied by a lady who spoke to you and got lunch from you?"

"I don't, sir."

A cold perspiration burst forth upon my forehead. "Think," I continued, "I was sitting at that side of the room, and you said the master was in Macroom and the cook in Cork; and,—and—the kitchen had been put to the top of the house. Don't you recollect?"

"Indeed then I don't, sir; I never laid eyes on you in my born days until now. I didn't see any lady here at all, at all; though what you say about the house is right enough."

I stared hard at her, but she met my glance unflinchingly. Truth-telling is the virtue of an unimaginative people, and the Irish are not wanting in imagination; but I had not expected this, even in Ireland. Either the girl was the most consummate actress who ever played a part, or I was the victim of a jugglery of eye and ear unparalleled in the history of hallucination. It was impossible, I told myself, that I could have been mistaken; she was identically the same girl but a little less sleepy-looking than the day before. Turning my head I saw Speedwell's anxious face at my shoulder.

"Did you go near that desk?" asked the master after an awkward pause.

"No, sir, I never did such a thing,"

replied the girl proudly, with unmistakable signs of coming tears.

"That will do ; you may go."

We went back into the room, and my host began to chat of other things ; but I noticed that his voice and Bob's had grown graver, and that, when they addressed me, they did so in a deferential tone which annoyed me unspeakably. Another man would probably have dismissed the subject, but I clung to it. The owner of Hauteville behaved splendidly. Not only did he continue affecting to take me seriously, but he patiently wrote out at my suggestion an account of what had taken place, with the exception of the incident of the deed, which I felt that I could not refer to without breaking confidence. I described minutely the coloured glasses from which I had drunk ; and after a search they were found, carefully put away in a cabinet opened by the cook's keys, that functionary playing the part of housekeeper in the establishment. I had, too, one grain of comfort in the fact that my host seemed impressed by the position of the miniature on the flowers.

When we took our departure, Bob proposed that we should return to his house by a much more circuitous route than that by which we had come ; but I insisted on crossing the bridge, and by rare good luck we found my old guide of the previous day, in attendance on a party of tourists who were killing half an hour by gaping at the ruined walls of Una's castle. When they had gone, I hastened after the woman, as she hurriedly put the key in her pocket and turned away evidently desirous of avoiding me, and brought her to an abrupt halt. "Look here, Bob," I cried ; "you may think what you like of my story, but there is the woman who, of her own accord, questioned the lady on this bridge.

Do you remember me?" I said addressing her.

"I do, of course, your honour."

"Thank God ! Do you recollect the foreign-looking lady who was with me?"

"What lady, your honour?"

"The woman to whom you spoke in Irish."

She glanced from me to Bob and blessed herself. "Yeh, the Lord between us an' harm ! That was no woman ; 'twas a banshee !"

"How did you know?"

"Yeh, 'tisn't for the likes of me to be talking of them things to the likes of you, sir ; but sure she had no shadow."

"No shadow !"

"No ; don't you remimber she kept in the shade of the wall, an' only kem out whenever the sun was behind a cloud ? Maybe you didn't, for you were lookin' at her face all the time, an' small blame to you," she added, the triumph of her sex twinkling in her sunken eyes.

"No shadow !" I echoed. "Good Heaven, I took her hand in mine ; it was as real as your own."

The woman smiled pityingly. "Sure you thought that, sir ; you felt and saw as she willed. When I strike that stone," she continued, touching one of the moss-patched slabs on the parapet of the bridge with her crooked fingers, "I feel it hard an' real, don't I ? Well, if it wasn't there at all but only an image of it, an' if I felt it hard an' cold to my hand all the same, wouldn't it be real to me?"

"Egad, we're in for a lecture on metaphysics," cried Bob. "This is what comes of the higher education of women."

"There's a man down there," continued the crone, "a brother of Jerry Downey's, an' his leg had to be cut off last year becace it was caught in

a machine at the O'Learys'. He was very bad intirely, an' I sat up with him a couple of nights. Well, that man used to wake screeching from the pain in his foot an' toes, the foot an' toes, mind you, of the leg that was cut off an' wasn't there at all, at all. 'Yeh, Mat,' I used to say, 'don't be goin' on like that; sure it's only your imagination.' 'Yerrah, hould your tongue, woman,' he'd say back to me; '*honom-an-dhoul*, don't I feel it!'"

She moved on a few paces. I put my hand on her arm. "Listen to me," I cried. "You talked for a couple of minutes; what was it you said to her in Irish, and what did she say to you?"

"I can't tell you that, sir," the woman replied with a certain dignity. "I spoke to her in Irish so that you might not understand, like the way you spoke to her too, I suppose; an' well she knew what I was sayin'. She told me she learned it here in this part of the country. She said she meant no mischief to you, an' that's all I may say. So, I wish ye both good-day, an' may the Lord have us all in His holy keepin'. Sure they're well kept whom God keeps!"

This pious remark closed the conversation, for the woman, with a curtesy, turned suddenly into a neighbouring house, thus effectually putting an end to further questioning. We went on in silence, strolling home by the river that ran shimmering on to Oakgrove with its wood-crowned slopes. I could see my companion was abstracted, perhaps annoyed, by my conduct at Hauteville; our interview with the woman had probably restored his belief in my sanity, but he still wore a sorely puzzled air. For my own part I was not surprised by the woman's tranquil acceptance of the situation. I knew enough of Ireland to be aware that many a question which might give the

Psychical Research Society pause would be settled offhand by an Irish peasant, to whom nothing in the supernatural order is impossible or incongruous.

"One thing I must ask you, Dick," Speedwell observed, when we had discussed the matter at length. "Don't say anything about this spirit-rapping business to Ethel; she may be more susceptible than we."

"Have no fear on that score," I replied, "for I shall probably be on the road to-morrow, and no doubt shall soon forget the Lady of the Castle; London is not propitious to ghosts."

Bob laughed, feeling, I knew, relieved, although he insisted on my staying another day to see Gougane Barra; which I did, in a blinding wintry mist that made its squalor and loneliness more awful still, until in my wrath I said that all guide-books were liars, and an Irish guide-book the king of them all.

For my own part, I wished to get away some short time before my leave expired, so that I might satisfy myself on some important points in this strange experience. Reaching Cork next day at noon, I broke my journey there, and made inquiries for the solicitors to whom I had posted the envelope at Coachford, but could learn nothing about either themselves or the street in which they resided. Struck, however, by my earnestness, one of those whom I consulted, a solicitor himself, introduced me to a quiet, gentleman-like man who I understood had made the history and development of the city a special study. On learning my wants he took me to his office, and producing a few maps of Cork searched them carefully but unsuccessfully. "I see," he muttered; "it must go back before 1800." The next map we consulted was of an earlier date, and in

it we found the street I sought. My friend pushed his spectacles over his forehead, and looking at me began to laugh silently. "I am not surprised, sir," he said, "that you failed in your search. That street has been renamed, and instead of being the fashionable thoroughfare it once was is now inhabited only by the saddest class of the poor, those who still hide their poverty under the garb of shabby gentility. But your solicitors, we have a fair clue to them. Will you kindly hand me down that calf-bound volume on the second shelf? Thanks; it is a directory compiled in the year in which the map was published; I bought it at a bookstall for a few pence." He opened the work, ran his finger down an alphabetical list of names, and triumphantly read out to me those I required, together with the number of their place of business in the street mentioned.

My kindly helper would have detained me with much information of antiquarian interest, and indeed offered to show me the place in question, but my mind was full of another idea. If the names were genuine, then, after all, I had sent a real letter, and it should be now awaiting me at the Cork Post Office. Excusing myself, I hurried off to make inquiries there, leaving my scholarly friend in what he must have thought an ungrateful manner.

I cannot describe the frenzy of impatience with which I waited while the search for the letter was being prosecuted, for on it seemed to depend the last test I could apply to the truth of my adventure. At length an official returned bearing some envelopes, and among them I instantly recognised mine. The address, he explained, could not be found, and the letter being opened in due course, the contents were discovered, a little damaged. Trembling

with eagerness, I almost snatched the precious packet from him, and hastening to my hotel extracted from the box, which almost went to pieces in my hands, the memorable enclosure; but the parchment, that a few days before had looked comparatively fresh, had since faded to a muddy yellow and was torn in places, the very envelope which enclosed it being now more durable than this poor relic of the stormy past. Still, I could decipher the writing, and was thus able to identify it.

While poring over the sheet a sudden thought came to me. Why not deliver the document yourself? Carry out her wish so far as human effort may. I determined to do so.

I was to leave the city that night, and whatever I did must be done at once; so securing the letter and throwing on my hat, I again sought my painstaking acquaintance. I found him about to leave his office on the South Mall. Apologising for my sudden disappearance, I reminded him of his offer to show me the street I wished to find. Displaying a patient courtesy, which I now remember with a twofold gratitude since his place knows him no more, he consented, and hiring a jingle, or canvas-covered car, we skirted the river and its shipping, turned off through thoroughfares alive with traffic, and then rattled along over lonely, miserable streets intersected by alleys more squalid still. At one of these the driver pulled up, and we alighted. Desiring the man to wait, my guide led me through a tangle of evil-smelling lanes into another deserted street, one side being a long wall apparently enclosing some manufacturing premises. "Houses stood there once," said my companion; "but the site is occupied by that wall and those yards beyond. However you can see here of what fashion they must have been."



He pointed to a dreary line of neglected mansions that even still in their decay retained something of the strength and dignity which had marked them in their day of pride.<sup>4</sup> Some were approached by flights of steps where ragged children were playing with the unconquerable cheerfulness of the Celt; others had deep, boldly-moulded porches of limestone that yet mocked time and change; all bore the ineffaceable stamp of former prosperity. My friend had spoken truly when he called the place shabby-genteel. There were no slatternly women lounging at the doors; nor was there any of the loud-voiced negro-like gaiety of the adjacent lanes, though many furtive and timid glances scanned us from behind the pitiful cracked flower-pots on the window-sills. A broken-looking man, clad in rusty black, crept up the steps before a house, and we saw a poor pinched woman greet him with the phantom of an embrace. We had here under our eyes the stage on which is played the tragi-comedy of genteel misery that makes its last stand in its last ditch. I had often laughed at Irish poverty; but in this silent, forgotten spot, the grave of so many hopes and dreams, it took another character which did not lend itself so readily to farcical tradition; and it seemed as if I could hear the Frenchwoman asking me inconsequently: "Is your land altogether innocent of this?"

Remembering her packet I muttered

an excuse, and mounting to the door of the most deserted-looking house on pretence of examining the tarnished plate thereon, slipped the document, with half-a-crown for the lucky finder, through one of the partly opened windows.

That is all. I feel keenly my inability to gather together the various strands of this narrative, weave them into one, and present the reader with a neatly rounded conclusion; but experience shows us daily, in affairs of far more common occurrence, that it is often futile to theorise and impossible to explain. It would seem, indeed, as if my extraordinary adventure, with its sharply contrasting contradictions and improbabilities, was designed expressly to show how utterly the human intellect may be baffled when it strives to rend the invisible veil which hides from us the Spirit Land whither we are all journeying. For myself, I have long since renounced all attempts at a solution; I am simply content to believe what I have set forth. Some days later I heard the familiar roar of London, and ere long the lonely Irish castle in the Irish stream was lost behind the flooding cares of this work-day world. But there are times still when I find myself once more beneath its shadow and face to face with the loveliest woman it has been my lot to meet; and I think of her last words, and wonder when and how we shall meet again.

## THE FATHER OF THE BRITISH NAVY.<sup>1</sup>

THE new translation of the Apocrypha has not altered the injunction, "Let us now praise famous men"; but it may be doubted whether there is any text in Holy Writ which our nation is less apt in obeying; and the usual excuse is at least a true if not altogether a convincing one,—it is not the English way. What better proof of this could there be than the recent attempt to bring about something like a celebration of Trafalgar Day, and to revive some slight interest in the crowning achievement of our greatest sailor? A most laudable effort, but carried out, surely, in a way that would have raised a smile of contempt among most continental nations, and was indeed hardly in keeping with the examples of the classical past; and yet this feeble attempt was belauded as a novelty, and much discussed in the newspapers for at least a day afterwards. If these things are done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? If Nelson and Trafalgar are so scantily remembered, what chance is there for naval heroes of an earlier date and less exalted fame? We have done enough, according to our national conscience, when we have dedicated a square and a column to the victor and his victory; we can barely spare a poor wreath or two for his commemoration day; we are too busy with commerce and politics, and time flies fast, and it all happened a hundred years ago. And so from the wisdom of the Son of

Sirach we turn to the wit of Byron and say:

Let not a monument give you or me hopes,  
Since not a pinch of dust remains of  
Cheops.

Yet there are signs that the nation is slowly awaking to the fact that it has had a great navy in the past; that it did in very truth once hold, and ought now and hereafter to hold, that command of the sea, the importance of which, with curious and characteristic ignorance, it imagines to have been first appreciated and explained by the notable writings of Captain Mahan. And so there is just a chance that some few may be curious to inquire into the state of the navy anterior to Nelson's date, and to discover who had the chief hand in forging the instrument he used to such skilful and noble purpose.

*Fortes creantur fortibus*; no one in his senses supposes that the navy of Nelson sprang into being, fully trained and competent, at his call. Trafalgar was the culminating point of a long period of preparation; and those who laid the foundations may justly claim to share in the final glory. But who were they, and at what period are we to look for them? To answer the last question first, we may fairly say that the history of the modern navy began with the wars of George the Second's reign, in the middle of the last century; and of its two founders, the name of Anson is familiar to every schoolboy, while the name of Hawke has been consigned to a singular and most undeserved oblivion. The fact is that to become a national hero demands that aroma of the romantic and the

<sup>1</sup> THE LIFE OF ADMIRAL LORD HAWKE; by Montagu Burrows, Captain R.N., and Chichele Professor of Modern History in the University of Oxford. 2nd edition, London, 1896.

extraordinary which hangs around the deeds of such men as Drake and Anson and Nelson, and was wanting in the laborious career of Hawke. Moreover the climax is more sensational than the inception: the blaze of the last great triumph dazzles us and suffices; and thus the man whom Admiral Keppel (the best possible authority of the time) styled in the House of Commons "the Father of the British Navy" has been obscured by the renown of his offspring, and Quiberon has paled before Trafalgar. Two slight proofs of this may be drawn from very different sources, the public-house and the Navy List. There is a certain immortality in signboards, for they are curiously tenacious of life, and express in a rough way the popular verdict on the doings of heroes. The names and the counterfeit presentments of Vernon and of Keppel (who owed his training to Hawke) still swing above many a tavern door, while that of Hawke has never been held worthy of this peculiarly British honour. Analogously, in the list of Her Majesty's ships, while Collingwood and Rodney, Anson and Howe are the eponymous heroes of the largest war-vessels afloat, the Hawke is but a first-class cruiser of seven thousand tons.

Such being the indirect evidence against him, it may well be asked, what were Hawke's claims to be called the Father of the Navy; and, if valid, how is it that his paternity has been so scantily recognised? It may at least be urged that the judgment of his contemporaries was widely different from that of posterity. Horace Walpole is not generally accused of indiscriminate praise, and yet his encomium on Hawke almost amounts to enthusiasm; Burke, who was a fairly severe critic on occasion, bestowed flattering epithets upon him in the House; George the Second, who,

whatever his faults, was a brave man himself and a judge of bravery in others, dubbed him "my captain;" and the GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, the broadsheets, the popular songs and other light literature of the time, bear witness to the popular estimate of the hero of Quiberon in such elegant stanzas as the following:

Though Conflans did boast he'd conquer  
our coast,

Our thunder soon made Monsieur mute;  
Brave Hawke winged his way, then  
pounced on his prey,  
And gave him an English salute.

But Hawke's claim to the title which Keppel gave him rests mainly, not on a single battle nor on the rhapsodies of ephemeral literature, but on a discovery which was almost as important as Anson's, though it was made in the field of tactics rather than of topography. It is indeed surprising, almost incredible, that so late as the middle of the last century, after many hundred years of battles by sea, such a discovery still remained to be made; but the fact is as interesting as it is incontestable. The discovery was simply this,—and it sounds almost puerile when reduced to plain language—that naval engagements, to be worth fighting at all, must be decisive; that strict adherence to the recognised methods of procedure was very well at the commencement of an action, but was to be thrown to the winds when anything better could be done; that in fact (to use Hawke's own words in his instructions to his officers just before Quiberon) as regards the enemy, "he was for the old way of fighting, to make downright work of them." Surely the man deserves something more than a qualified oblivion who could deliver at the crucial moment such an order as this; a truism perhaps to our ears nowadays, but pregnant with influence at the time upon the naval warfare of the

future. How he understood it himself may be gathered from his retort to the master of his ship, who remonstrated with him on the perils of pursuing the French flagship further among the rocks and shoals of Quiberon Bay: "You have done your duty, sir, in showing me the danger; you are now to comply with my order and lay me alongside the *Soleil Royal*." How the lesson was taken to heart and developed by Rodney and by Nelson is familiar to every reader of English history.

The merit due to Hawke for enforcing this innovation, one may almost say this revolution, in tactics is enhanced by several circumstances. In the first place it portended, if unsuccessful, very considerable danger to the position and prospects of the innovator. The only previous occasion on which it had been tried in an engagement between fleets of equal size had exemplified the certainty of disgrace in case of failure; for the unfortunate Admiral Mathews, who broke the line in the action off Toulon, was himself promptly broken for so doing. Secondly, no one can read the minutes of the remarkable series of courts-martial which were held concerning both this and several subsequent actions, without being struck with the exceedingly critical conditions under which the naval warfare of that date had to be carried on. Certain hard and fast rules, intelligible enough in their origin, had been gradually formulated for the conduct of such warfare; the results so gained were monotonously and painfully inefficient; the nation at large was growling with impatience and disappointment, and, in the case of the affair off Toulon, peremptorily overrode the dilatoriness of the Admiralty, and forced a court-martial upon no less than two admirals and six captains. Whose genius was to solve

the problem of combining freedom of action on occasion with strictness of discipline in general? Whose sword was to cut the knot that fettered the daring of the individual and impeded the instinct of the hero? The man who from the beginning to the end of his splendid career, from the battle of Toulon to the battle of Quiberon, consistently taught and insisted on the "old way of fighting, to make downright work of them." But mere maxims are a waste of energy without sufficient preparations for their due observance; and the third fact, which enhances the merit of Hawke's innovation, and adds to his right to the title claimed for him, is that throughout his correspondence and despatches he shows himself to have been on the best of terms with his subordinate officers, keenly and constantly solicitous for the comfort and well-being of his crews, respectful, firm, and dignified towards his superiors. No one knew better than he how to seize upon victory at the doubtful moment; but he was equally well aware that the success of the stroke depends on the tempering of the blade, and that those happy results which are popularly attributed to good fortune are usually the natural issue of infinite trouble and foresight. His biographer, in summing up the causes which led to the success of Quiberon, says of him with justice:

In the present case it is not easy to decide which to admire most, the successful struggle for six months with the almost infinite difficulties of the situation, or the grand decisiveness of the final resolution when the moment for action arrived. The least weakness in giving way to the traditions of bureaucracy on the questions of victualling, cleaning, and despatching back again his ships, would have left Hawke powerless on the day of battle, with sick crews, ships that would not sail, and officers worn out with the endless fatigues of cruising in gales of wind and on a lee-shore. The least failure of self-reliance,

the least attention to the officious suggestions that beset an admiral in such a time of excitement, the least relaxation of the steady discipline and even-tempered rule which, neglecting no detail, impresses every man in a fleet, from highest to lowest, with a desire to do his duty, and yet spreads around the cheerful spirit produced by human sympathy on the part of the chief, would in all probability have told fatally in such a prolonged conflict.

One is tempted to dwell, at greater length than is here possible, on this magnificent battle, the crowning feat of the wonderful year 1759; more especially as it appears to belong to that class of historical facts which everybody knows and nobody remembers. It is so impossible for us to realise the intense excitement of a long-projected, and at last impending, invasion of English shores by a French force; it seems so remotely probable now; it seemed so hourly imminent then. There are so many of the dramatic interludes and breathless pauses that are familiar in the story of the Armada and of Trafalgar, the alarms and excursions, the chance of storm and calm, the escape and the pursuit; the vast issues hanging on the arbitrament of an even combat; the mad rush of the encounter, and the glorious issue. It was indeed time that the tide should turn in favour of England, for the year 1757 had been one long dark record of disaster by sea and land, of divided counsels, of incompetence in high places, and of inefficient commanders mismanaging half-trained forces. But Pitt was at last at the helm: the country was with him to a man; and he could both lay his own plans and choose his own instruments for their execution. It was an exciting moment in the game of conquest; France and England the players, America and India the stake. Only two years previously it had seemed as if France were not only the luckier but the better player. Then

gradually the game changes, the issue is doubtful, the chances are about even. The splendid audacity of Clive at Plassey, the heroism of Wolfe at Quebec, the magnificent generalship of Frederic at Rossbach and Leuthen, forced the French government to have recourse to its last chance, the invasion of England. Nor was it merely the reckless effort of a despairing gamester. A false step or two on the part of the English commander, a lucky chance or two in the matter of winds and calms, and the fleets from Dunkirk, Brest, and Havre, with the army from Quiberon, might have joined in a common invasion which would have altered the course of history.

It was Hawke's task to watch those three strong fleets as a cat watches a mouse, all through the treacherous autumn weather and right into the turbulent winter. Blown from his station one day, he was back again the next; until the fiercest of the November gales forced him for four days from his post, and he hurried breathless back to find his prey escaped. The great French fleet was on its way to Quiberon where the army lay ready to embark, and the fate of England depended on one man's resolution. It was the crisis of the game; the players face to face and well matched, the scene and circumstances as dramatic as nature could make them. There was just one chance, for the English, of immediate and final victory, and every argument seemed opposed to it; it was, to throw prudence and precedents to the winds, to follow the enemy hot-foot through storm and shoal, and close with him at every risk, be it calm or tempest, daylight or darkness. We can see now that this was not the only, but the one best thing to do, for wisdom after the event is as clear-sighted as it is unsparing; but the point about this battle is that the Admiral saw his



course as clearly and rapidly as we do. It was no time for councils of war and eloquent debate. "We crowded after the enemy," says he, "with every sail our ships could bear." Curiously simple language this to enwrap a great resolve on which the fate of nations hung; yet perhaps the simplicity and the greatness were closely akin. And so, long past mid-day in the gloom of the November storm, the battle begins; but there is daylight enough for what has to be done. And the audience are ready too for the play; they line the beach in thousands to watch the unusual sight of a battle in the shallows. We can picture their hopes, as the rashness of the English leader promises prompt destruction; their surprise, when he waits to form no line of battle, but sends each ship against its nearest foe as fast as sails will carry her; their unwilling admiration when the Royal George forces one ship to strike, sends another to the bottom, and then hotly engages half-a-dozen at once; and their despair when the White Flag is utterly vanquished ere night falls, and saved from complete annihilation by nothing but the cover of darkness.

We may search through the splendid annals of the British Navy, and though we shall find victories in which larger fleets were engaged and issues as momentous at stake, we shall not find one in which so many adverse circumstances combined to make battle difficult, and decisive victory almost impossible. And yet, says the Admiral in the most modest despatch that victor ever penned, "I was under the necessity of running all risks to break this strong force of the enemy." Here was his great maxim put to the strongest test at last, and he elected "to make downright work of them."

To complete our estimate of the merit of this victory, we must remember that the two fleets were very fairly

matched in number of ships; and if the English had some slight superiority in number of guns, this was more than counterbalanced by the accurate knowledge which the French had of the coast. Nor were the commanders on either side badly matched in reputation and ability; for M. de Conflans had shown himself to be one of the very best men in the French navy, and M. du Verger, the vice-admiral, was an officer of exceptional ability and bravery. In fact the way in which they laid their plans upon this occasion, dashed out of Brest on the first opportunity, and so nearly succeeded in eluding the British fleet, is the best possible testimony to their merits as tacticians.

And lastly, if it is by results that the importance of a victory is to be gauged, few have been more prolific than Quiberon of immediate and of lasting consequences. "It not only," says Smollett, "defeated the projected invasion which had hung menacing so long over the apprehensions of Great Britain, but it gave the finishing blow to the naval power of France." And a French historian writes: "This deplorable catastrophe consummated the humiliation of France. The navy, whose honour had hitherto been intact, fell to the level of the land-forces. The corruption, effeminacy, and selfishness of the Court now penetrated the military, and then carried away the naval nobility." Moreover its effect upon the finances of that country was disastrous. The public credit collapsed, the payment of interest on the National Debt was stopped, and the most extreme measures had to be employed to raise money. Nor was the projected invasion regarded in England as an empty rhetorical threat, the mere moving of a pawn or two in a diplomatic game of chess. The letters from the Admiralty to Hawke are full of nervous apprehension, while

his replies on the other hand exhibit in their highest degree that cool grasp of the situation, that deep-seated determination to do the wisest and best thing in the circumstances, which Horace ascribes to the calm and resolute man whom neither the rash counsels of the citizens nor the fury of the gale will shake from his firm resolve. The fury of the gale (with the Bay of Biscay instead of the milder Adriatic) has been dwelt upon already; the rash counsels were in the present case not a whit less furious; for the historian of the war tells us that "to such a pitch were the people of England incensed by the opportunity given to M. Conflans on the retreat of Admiral Hawke from the bay, that they would have allowed no excuse, nor considered the irresistible power of the winds and the seas that drove him home, but made him responsible for his misfortunes." If further proof were wanted of the justice of this forecast, it might be found in the almost painfully ludicrous fact that on the very day of the victory, on the very day when the great Admiral was setting the crowning touch to his bravery and his patriotism, an excited mob was burning him in effigy as a traitor and a coward for having allowed the French to escape his blockade.

One more circumstance which came near to fettering Hawke's movements, and to causing the loss of the critical moment, remains to be mentioned. It is described in that dull biography of Chatham which inspired one of Macaulay's most brilliant essays, and is pithy enough to quote in full.

There was a question about sending Hawke to sea to keep watch over M. de Conflans; it was November; the weather was stormy and dangerous for a fleet. Mr. Pitt, in bed with the gout, was obliged to receive those who had business with him in a room where there were two beds, and where there was no fire, for he could not

bear one. The Duke of Newcastle (the Prime Minister in name), who was a very chilly person, came to see him on the subject of this fleet, which he was most unwilling to send to sea. He had scarcely entered the room when he cried out, shivering all over with cold: "How is this? No fire?" "No," said Mr. Pitt, "when I have the gout I cannot bear one." The Duke, finding himself obliged to put up with it, took a seat by the bedside of the invalid, wrapped up in his cloak, and began the conversation. But unable to stand the cold for any length of time, he said, "Pray allow me to protect myself from the cold in that bed you have by your side," and without taking off his cloak, he buried himself in Lady Esther Pitt's bed and continued the conversation. The Duke was strongly opposed to risking the fleet in the November gales; Mr. Pitt was absolutely resolved that it should put to sea; and both argued the matter with much warmth. "I am positively determined the fleet shall sail," said Pitt, accompanying his words with the most lively gesticulations. "It is impossible; it will perish," said the Duke, making a thousand contortions. Sir Charles Frederick, of the Ordnance, coming in at the moment, found them in this ridiculous position; and had infinite trouble in keeping his countenance when he discovered the two ministers deliberating on a matter of such great importance in a situation so novel and extraordinary. The fleet nevertheless put to sea: and Mr. Pitt was right, for Admiral Hawke defeated M. de Conflans; and it was the most decisive victory the English gained over the French during that war.

The thanks of the House of Commons in the familiar flowery style, a modest pension for two lives, a peerage, delayed for seventeen years after the date of Quiberon and granted when the recipient was too old and infirm to enjoy it,—these were the rewards thought sufficient for a lifelong devotion to the most arduous duties, for a victory which annihilated an enemy's navy, saved England from certain invasion, and set the most splendid example in our sea-annals of British pluck and resolution. They certainly did not err on the side of generosity; and the services which earned them contrast somewhat rudely

with the achievements for which coronets and ribbons and orders are so profusely bestowed in modern times. But Hawke was the last person to complain, perhaps to care. In an age when Court honours were largely the issue of Court intrigue and political jobbery, his monument proudly states that he "disdained to ask" for preferment; and though mural tablets are not always veracious history, the man's whole life bears out the noble sentiment. But neither age nor illness could impair his vigorous instincts, or quench the fire of battle. Only a year before his death, when he was seventy-five and failing fast in health, he wrote to his friend Admiral Geary, who was blockading Brest: "My good friend, I have always wished you well, and have ever talked freely and openly to you upon every subject connected with the service. Recollect some of these passages, and for God's sake, if you should be so lucky as to get sight of the enemy, get as close to them as possible. Do not let them shuffle with you by engaging at a distance; but get within musket-shot if you can: that will be the way to gain great honour, and will be the means to make the action decisive."

A nation will always, no doubt, choose its chief popular heroes from among that small class of extraordinary men who have the power, which every one can recognise and no one word can accurately define, of creating an enthusiasm amounting to devotion by means of some hidden, half-conscious force that is in them.

Nelson is perhaps the prototype of this class; and the names of Drake, Napoleon, and Nicholson among others, spring readily to the lips. But the pre-eminence of such men as these, around whom the romance of history clusters, need not blind us entirely to the claims of the more ordinary heroes, whose work was often as important in itself, and sometimes formed a direct preparation for the more abnormal achievements.

And surely it is surprising that a sailor whose claim to the gratitude of the navy and of his country was of such overwhelming importance, whose career was an almost perfect model of devotion to duty, of untiring attention to the wants and the rights of his subordinates, of obedience tempered by daring, of patient and wise preparation for conclusive and crushing results, should not only have been kept waiting seventeen years for the peerage he so richly deserved, but should have been left for over a century without the posthumous tribute of a competent biography. That want has now at last been supplied; and the reader who desires (and what Englishman does not desire?) to study the genesis of our sea-power, will find in it an interesting and graphic account of a man who owed his success to his own merits rather than to interest or good fortune; and he will rise from its perusal with the conviction that the title Hawke would have coveted most was the one which Keppel so justly conferred upon him,—the Father of the British Navy.

## A DAY ON THE YELLOW CLAY.

YELLOW clay,—the name is not attractive, the substance is not beautiful, the associations are neither of health nor enjoyment. Barren shrubs, sickly reeds, rank disorderly herbage, are the natural characteristics of yellow clay all the world over; while to unfortunate humanity it is connected chiefly with garments caked from heel to waist, with slovenliness and with rheumatism. Test it, if you will, in the so-called paradise of New Zealand, on the cold comfortless hills round Wellington where men have felled the forest that once hid their nakedness, and you will find the blackened corpses of the trees shrouded in wiry unprofitable bracken, and English gorse struggling with noxious native weeds for a hold on the miserable soil. Or go no further than English Devon, a county generally remembered by tracts of rich red loam and cliffs of stern gray ironstone, and there you will see, stretching from the Cornish border full thirty miles eastward, a large patch of as wretched and inhospitable country as ever raised a thistle. Clovelly, with all its beauties of cliff and wood and wave, is within a few hundred yards; but visitors seldom turn their eyes from the sea to mark what manner of land it is that thus abruptly ends in a precipice of ironstone above the Bristol Channel. And they are right, for it is condemned to hopeless infertility, and all green things are crushed between the hammer of the west wind and the anvil of the yellow clay.

And yet there is something to be loved in the yellow clay. We speak not as an agriculturist, for though we have been assured by many a farmer

that it is capital land for summering bullocks in dry seasons, we cannot forget that dry seasons are not the rule in Devon, and that the little red cattle of the country possess to a singular degree the virtue of growing fat upon poor fodder. Moreover we have a not wholly grateful feeling towards certain men of a past generation who sunk thousands of pounds in the endeavour to improve some of this detestable land and make two blades of grass grow where one declined to grow before; a philanthropic effort which resulted only in the temporary discomfort of innocent snipe, and the lasting impoverishment of a deserving posterity. But we love this yellow clay for its steady refusal to be improved. Most people have in their hearts a secret admiration for any creature that declines to be tamed, whether it be horse or dog or man. It is true that the fate of such is generally to be shot or hanged or otherwise cleared out of the way; but no such summary measures can be taken with land. You may gash it with drains and gutters, but if it be irreclaimable yellow clay you will hardly leave so much as a scar upon it; and your efforts will be as fruitless and, if you would but confess it, only less ridiculous than those of Xerxes to chastise the Hellespont. Wild animals that shrink from the discipline of man know the yellow clay for their friend and flock to it, just as men who shun order and obedience take refuge in savage lands. Wherefore to him that loves a really wild day's sport the bleak, inhospitable, forsaken land is a paradise indeed.

Of all months in the year Novem-

ber is on the whole the best for a walk with the gun over the yellow clay, with a soft wind blowing from the south-west and a damp leaden sky overhead; a day when Lundy rises gray and cold out of a cold gray sea, and the herring-boats fly home with their red sails turned to gray, and the smoke of the coasting colliers throws aloft an almost welcome cloud of inky black as a plaything for the mild warm breeze. The great rolling range of Exmoor, twenty miles away, is half shrouded in mist; but, unless we are mistaken, the staghounds are even now jogging gently over the heather to the meet, and the old huntsman is remarking, as his horse sinks hoofdeep in the spongy soil, that "the water will fly on the forest" when hounds begin to run. But they must run without us to-day, for we have put on our very worst clothes for a long and dirty walk, and are filling our cartridge-bag. Shall it be twenty or thirty cartridges to-day? Twenty will be ample in all probability, but let us make it thirty, for the weight even so is trifling. And now let us begin the day, as always in North Devon, by climbing a hill. A steep narrow road, with banks four feet above our head and a bottom that the efforts of the Local Board strive in vain to alter from a kind of river's bed to a macadamised highway, leads us whither we are bound; and after a mile of travelling in the close muggy atmosphere we feel as though we were marching through tropical forest.

Here is the top at last: the wind strikes gratefully cool in our face; and there leaning over a gate is a keeper, black and swarthy as a Spaniard, with a single spaniel. He too has donned his very worst clothes, and, did we not know him to be the gentlest of living creatures, might pass for a dangerous companion. There are not many snipe in, he thinks, though there were plenty a month

agone, and he had not seen many woodcock; there may be a pheasant or two, and there is a brood or two of partridges, though terrible wild; hares are almost extinct and rabbits very scarce; but we can't tell what we shall find till we try, and we had best walk through the beech spinney first, if we will please to take the left-hand side while he goes through the middle. The spinney aforesaid is but of two acres, a collection of miserable stunted trees which fight with infinite bravery a losing battle against the eternal wind from across the Atlantic. We scramble over a gap in the bank, smearing ourself all over with greasy yellow clay in the process, and, knowing the wild ways of the Devonshire spaniel, hasten forward alongside the spinney. The beeches sigh mournfully as though expecting a gale, and we only faintly catch the sound of wings in the trees behind us. We whisk round; nothing is to be seen; then again round, and there, a good forty yards ahead of us, are a long bill and two great lazy wings flapping leisurely off with all the assurance of an owl. We fire the first barrel at him instantly, and, unless the smoke has deceived us, he falls leisurely to the ground; but even while the report is ringing in our ear we hear the keeper yelling something unintelligible behind us, and again face rapidly to the rear. But this time the lazy wings are full seventy yards away, and as the second barrel is snapped after them they simply rise a few feet in the air and flap away erratically as if they might pause at any moment, on and on and on till they are fairly lost to sight. The keeper clambers out of the spinney, stands on the bank, and takes off his cap in despair. "There was two got up at my feet and went back," he says; "beautiful shots. I depended that you would have got the both." We endeavour to excuse our-



self as best we may, and point out that we have killed one that went forward ; but he will not be comforted. He had made sure that both would come to us, and if they did not the fault is obviously ours ; but he adds with a shake of the head, "They'm false, they 'oodcocks ; false as rats they be." And we, who know the similes of Devon and are aware that this comparison is the highest tribute that can be paid to the cunning of any wild animal, feel rather less guilty than we did.

And now we pass fairly on to the yellow clay moors, thousands of acres of rolling ground, the yellow grass dotted with clumps of gorse, and cut up by ragged neglected fences, sour and ugly and soaking with water. The spaniel, which so far has been kept rigidly to heel, seizes the opportunity to break away to the nearest gorse-clump, and in spite of frantic rebukes, declines to return. "Chloe—a, you wild old hermit," yells the keeper, for spaniels in Devon, for some reason, are frequently christened with classical names, and a hermit (we have struggled in vain to imagine why) is the measure of wildness. "Why do you bring out a wild young dog?" we ask with asperity. "Oh, she's nine or ten year old," he answers with a sweet smile ; "and she isn't wild most times, but she's terrible hard of hearing. She'll be back in a minute, but I expect we'm best get on after her." We think so too, and presently come upon her supremely busy on what is evidently a very faint line of scent. "Looketh like a pheasant," says the keeper softly ; "please to keep on after her, sir." She puzzles it out, inch by inch, very slowly, and takes us on for three hundred yards to a gateway, which, as usual on these moors, is filled with a sea of deep mud and twelve inches of water. Here scent naturally fails, and the

keeper, who has come to the conclusion that we are on the stale trail of that rare animal, a hare, is for calling the dog off ; but our curiosity is aroused and we insist on casting forward, to see whether nothing can be learned from the impressionable clay. Not a sign is to be found on this side ; but on splashing through the water we find on the far side new tracks in the softest of the clay, and, where it grows drier, the unmistakable imprint of three long claws,—nay, in one favourable spot we think we can detect the mark of a spur.

The spaniel is called forward and laid on, but scent is weak from water, and she cannot own it ; so we cast forward as gravely as though a fox were before us, and after some trouble hit the line once more. After a couple of hundred yards scent improves, and the spaniel's pace with it ; and presently we drop our gun to the trail and are fain to run. Still on to a patch of gorse where the spaniel throws up for a moment, but after a few minutes of desperate excitement makes a sudden dash into a tuft of fern ; and up rises a great cock-pheasant with all the astounding clamour that once so alarmed Mr. Briggs. We have had such good sport already, hunting his drag up to his bed that, but for the keeper, we should be inclined to spare him ; but old cock-pheasants are mischievous as vermin, and his fate is sealed. The spaniel picks him up and retrieves him with every sign of satisfaction, and we make a mental note of our run. Time, about twenty minutes ; distance, not less than half a mile ; and a kill in the open.

So far, good. We are already wet through and splashed from head to foot, so we make the more readily for a patch of bog that is a favourite with snipe. The ground quakes beneath us as though we were on bubbles, and we step warily, for if we break through

the thin crust of moss on which we walk, we cannot tell whether we shall sink to our knees, to mid-thigh, or to our armpits. Every instant we expect to hear the rush of wings and the shrill bleat of the little white-breasted bird; but it comes not, and we have almost given up hope when, with a louder whirr, an unexpected covey of partridges rises, a long shot ahead of us, and skims away with the speed of the wind. A snap-shot from our first barrel brings down the hindmost bird of them, and immediately a wisp of a dozen snipe rises three gun-shots before us, startled by the report, and vanishes out of our sight. It is exasperating, but it cannot be helped: on the moors one must kill what one can whenever one can; and the man who will not fire from dread of spoiling his own sport had better stay at home.

We watch the last of the snipe fade away against the gray clouds, when we are interrupted by a shrill voice shouting something unintelligible five hundred yards away. The keeper vociferates an equally unintelligible reply, and remarks that 'tis Mr. Buzzacott a-speaking, and that he made out the word partridges. Presently Mr. Buzzacott appears in person, as shabbily dressed as the poorest of his labourers, although he rents three hundred acres of yellow clay and better land; but he is received with great deference by the keeper, for he is the most eloquent preacher in the nearest chapel, and the keeper's wife is one of the pillars of his congregation. We have never sat under him ourself, but we know his discourses on hell-fire by village repute as some of the most moving that ever were delivered on that favourite topic of dissenting orators; and being the descendant of French Huguenot refugees, originally called Boucicault, he has perhaps a better title to fervour than most of

his neighbours. He hurries up breathless and grasps our hand with great warmth. "They partridges," he says in the richest of shrill Devon, "be gone up to my little root-field, so if you will fetch a compass and come in to the far side of them, the birds will undoubtedly go to the little old withy-bed, where I've seen them scores of times. I think, moreover, that you will find another covey there. I have long been in doubt whether there was one brood on my farm or two broods, but what I have seen in the last two weeks satisfactorily convinceth me that there's two." Every syllable comes out crisp and sharp as the shot from a Maxim gun, so excellent is the practice of the pulpit; and we start at once to fetch the necessary compass round the root-field, walking too fast to waste another word.

"Now," says Mr. Buzzacott, as he throws down a harrow, kicks away half a cartload of gorse, and tenderly lifts up the bars of a rickety gate which are held together by two straw bandages, as many hazel binders, and several pieces of string, "Here the birds be. There they go—da——" he adds, the warnings of the chapel forgotten for a moment in his excitement, but remembered in time to omit the final consonants and so save his conscience. "They'm gone right," he continues, intently watching the flight of the birds. "Now, sir, follow down my old fence, and you'm sure to find them, if you'll excuse me from attending on you further, for I am afflicted with the rheumatics." So off we start again to try down the fence for half a mile towards our lost covey. But the fence must be crossed, and that is no easy matter. First comes a deep ditch overgrown with gorse and thorns; then a bank broad enough to drive a coach on, also heavily overgrown with thorns, and so hollowed in the middle as almost to be cut in two; then an-

other deep ditch of like manner with the first, and some remarkably soft ground just beyond it. The folks that built such fences must either have been jealous of their boundaries or else keen sportsmen, for one never knows what game they may hold. We scramble through it somehow, with much splashing and scratching, while the spaniel selects the hollow in the midst and becomes busy at once.

A rabbit dodging in and out alongside the ditch is the first victim, and a stray woodcock the second; and then the spaniel begins to run with a keenness that shows that but one animal can be before her. There is nothing for it but to run as near as we may alongside of her, and hope that we may not be beaten by the most cunning of birds; but running in the deep, slippery soil is no such easy matter, and a cross fence brings us up short. We are barely at the top, panting and breathless, when we hear the heavy flutter of a rising cock-pheasant, who skims away low on the other side of the fence, giving us no chance but a long snap-shot, which is duly fired without result. But the report flushes a wisp of half-a-dozen snipe, of which we have just time to pick off one, and then the bank beneath our feet slides away in a small avalanche of greasy clay; we hang for a moment on our heels, pass swiftly on to the broad of our back, and then shoot down gracefully into the ditch below us. We are splashed up to the eyes, and caked with clay from neck to heel; the ditch is up to our waist, a protruding root has lifted our jacket over our head, and our face and hands are buried for a moment in a gorse-bush; but the voice of the keeper, unable from the other side of the boundary fence to witness the catastrophe, still urges us forward, we know not wherefore, and we

scramble out and on, loading and repairing damages as we go.

Out comes a rabbit, breaking boldly across the field, not too near, but a cross-shot, and therefore an easy one. He rolls over handsomely, and then, as usual, when one least expects it, up rises a covey of partridges, wild as hawks, but just within range. One bird falls to a very lucky shot, six more fly away, and we pause for the moment quite exhausted. The keeper, bewildered by the shooting of which he can see nothing, crushes his way to us through the boundary fence, and rejoices to find that there is something to be picked up, more indeed than we had expected, for the spaniel produces not one dead partridge, but two, though how the second can have come by his death, unless by the shot that killed the rabbit, before the covey rose from the ground, is a mystery. However, we are now satisfied that we have found both coveys, and that there are thirteen partridges for certain somewhere in the bleak acres around us, if we can only find them; not a great stock according to the ideas of some gentlemen of the gun, but to us on the yellow clay a multitude without number. Also, we have certain knowledge of one pheasant, and we may have the good luck to run against some more snipe.

So we tear on joyfully to the withy-bed, which is indeed no withy-bed, but a small sheet of shallow water, choked with high, sickly weeds, and surrounded with quaking moss. It is not a place in which one would naturally look for partridges; but all wild animals, from the red-deer downwards, seem to have a passion for lying in a dry spot amid wet ground, so we approach it with all silence and caution. No bird rises, and the spaniel, now quite disciplined by hard exercise, is sent in to see what she can find. Still no sign of a bird.

She splashes through the water to the ruined bank that dams it; and, after much rummaging, makes a dash into a tuft of grass, and away skims a partridge at his best pace. He drops dead, but is hardly fallen when another rises, likewise to share his fate, and five more are flushed and away before we can re-load. We are lucky to have found them, for when the Devonshire partridge takes it into his head to hide and lie fast, it is difficult to make him show himself. How often have we walked for hours, even in early September, over farms where we knew birds to be plentiful, and failed to find a single one. If they wish to conceal themselves there is always a great bank within a hundred yards of them, where any number of coveys could find shelter, and you may tread on them before they will rise. We remember once to have driven a covey of fourteen into a scrap of copse not forty yards square. Two men and two dogs went through it with busy sticks and hideous noises, and, finding nothing, joined us in abuse of the man who said that he had marked them down. He, like a sensible fellow, said nothing, but simply stayed by the copse for half an hour after we had left it, and presently saw the whole fourteen run out as if nothing had happened, to seek new lodging in an adjoining bank.

By this time we are beginning to look forward to an extraordinary day's sport, and wishing that we had brought more cartridges. A couple more snipe and a couple more rabbits heighten our hopes, and we talk big about killing more game than we care to carry. After such luck we should not altogether be surprised to come upon black game, though in truth we have never seen a poulter, as they call him in Devon, anywhere within twenty miles of the place where we stand.

But we can never tell what we may flush next in this country; a bittern, a wild goose, or even a pelican would be no great surprise, and would be more welcome to us, to be seen and saluted, than a hundred pheasants to be shot at and killed. But it is not safe to count on the yellow clay for a day of continuous sport, and though we try every likely spot, for the next two hours not a cartridge is fired. Magpies, hawks, crows, and a dozen of the keeper's pet abominations greet us at a respectful distance, and as we draw for a time nearer to the cliffs we have leisure to admire the red bill of the Cornish chough, and the graceful wheeling flight of two pair of great blunt-winged buzzards. But game we see none, though we tramp on with exemplary diligence; and our scattered coveys seem to have vanished into thin air.

At last we resolve to forsake the open, and draw a long strip of ragged gorse-brake adjoining our boundary; and lest we should give to our neighbour what we want for ourselves we draw it down wind. We steal down to the leeward end, take our stand in the middle of a tiny stream, which we select as on the whole the driest and firmest spot to be found in an extremely treacherous patch of ground, and wait for what may come. A woodpigeon, evidently scared by the keeper, comes first, sailing down over the hedge under which we stand concealed, a fine rocketing shot. Have we held far enough before him? Yes, the swift wings close, the ringed neck sinks, and he falls far beyond us in a cloud of white down. We hear the spaniel speaking faintly on the lower side of the brake, and watch sharply for a rabbit. A water-ousel comes flitting down over our head in panic terror, and a water-rail, which for a moment we mistake for a jack-snipe follows him: three jays, which have

been screeching irresolute for some minutes, at last make up their minds to face the open and be off; but still the spaniel speaks three hundred yards above us sharply and savagely, we know not upon what scent. Then there is a slight rustle in the hedge, a lithe brown body appears for an instant and, just giving a glimpse of a yellow belly, vanishes instantly into a rabbit-hole. Where there are stoats there are no rabbits, and we cease to watch for them accordingly. The spaniel has fallen silent, the blackbirds now begin to stream out past us with terrified screams, and we therefore conclude that, though we can hear nothing of them, keeper and dog have nearly beaten the brake out to us. Another rustle in the hedge and out comes very leisurely and slowly within ten yards of us a great gray fox. Quite unconscious of our presence he stands for a moment listening, and we can study him at our ease; a great gray fellow as we have said, evidently old and well stricken in years, with a bit of a ruff round his neck that gives him almost the appearance of a wolf. His teeth are past their first sharpness, as we guess; but we suspect that he would lead even the best pack of hounds a merry dance, and make a brave fight at the end. We remember to have seen just such another on Exmoor, draggled, bent, and beat, hurl himself into a tuft of gorse and turn defiant as a stag to meet his doom. The pack had begun to tail after a long chase; a single hound first came up to him, and, after one glance into the gorse bush, decided that it would be more prudent to wait for assistance before going any further.

There he stands, the hoary-brushed old vagabond, his mind little perturbed, but inclined to think on the whole that he had better move. They are not his sworn enemies that have intruded upon him, he is sure of that.

No. 438.—VOL. LXXIII.

But hark! the keeper opens his mouth to cheer the spaniel, and the gray ears listen intently. No! it is not the sound that he dreads; certainly it is not, but it is disagreeably near of kin to it, and it is best to beat a dignified retreat. A muffled note from the spaniel confirms his resolution, and he trots slowly away at his ease. It is perhaps a shame to shake such a confiding nature, but old foxes must not be suffered to relapse into imprudent repose. We used to be able to halloo once upon a time, and here is an excuse for recovering our lost art. The gray brush gives a whisk, the stealthy trot becomes a gallant stride, and the old sinner vanishes in haste away to the cliffs, or he best knows whither. The keeper hurries out to the sound; he has been busy with the study of a heap of feathers, and the spaniel not caring to face the gorse has been whiling away the time with a dance round a hedgehog.

But this interlude has broken the spell. As we strike away back to our ground of the morning, we get a shot into a flock of golden plover and add one of them to the bag. A ragged fence unexpectedly produces another woodcock, and the adjoining moor a jack-snipe; then, just as we are wondering whither we shall go next we hear a familiar shrill voice, and Mr. Buzzacott, riding a bare-backed cart-mare, with a halter, comes splashing through the clay to tell us that he has flushed one brood of partridges on his *arish* (stubble) and marked them down. Poor unfortunate birds! but we make haste after them, and are presently blundering, not quite so fresh as in the morning, over tussocks of furze and sickly rushes in pursuit. They are wild, but we manage to drop one, and the indefatigable Buzzacott, galloping heavily on the cart mare, marks:

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them down again. Once more we hurry after them, for the light is beginning to fail. They are scattered and rise singly; two are easily bagged, and then an ominous cloud from the sea breaks into sharp cutting rain. The moisture is a small matter, for we are wet through to the waist already, but the growing darkness is more serious. The third bird rises and is missed with both barrels; the fourth has the same luck, and the fifth we lose sight of altogether. It is of no use; we never could see well in the dusk, and having but two cartridges left decide to try no more. Mr. Buzzacott smiles with kindly contempt, and suggests that we should jump on to the back of his mare and go on; nor for all our argument will he believe that we stop not because we are unwilling to walk, but because we are unable to see.

Well then, if we must go home, he will show us the shortest way. We know what that means, but indeed a little food with rest and shelter is not unwelcome after our walk, and it is not unwillingly that we follow Mr. Buzzacott into his house. A pale girl, looking doubly ghastly in the flickering light of the fire, rises as we enter, and the hacking cough, which even so much exertion entails, tells too plainly what is amiss. She answers in reply to our inquiries that she is better, but Mr. Buzzacott will not hear of it. "Oh! her's weaker," he says cheerfully and encouragingly, "weaker every day, I can see that." The girl, we are glad to say, is well and hearty at this moment, but it is not from want of preparation for death on her father's part. But in truth all of Mr. Buzzacott's class and below it, in Devon at any rate, and we believe elsewhere, seem to feel a positive delight in feeling

the presence of death. Even in their letters, whenever inspiration fails the monotonous phrase, "Dear father and mother, may we meet in heaven," recurs again and again. But all such reflections are cut short by the entrance of Mrs. Buzzacott, who with many apologies leads us into the parlour, and there, after a few minutes' solitude, which we eagerly devote to an old hawker's print of Commerce restoring Prosperity to France and England, *Anno* 1803 (three imposing females measuring four feet from forehead to waist, five more from waist to knee, and three more from knee to heel), we are set face to face with tea enough for a dozen hungry men.

With difficulty we take our leave before we have seriously over-eaten ourselves, and walk off with the keeper through the driving rain. He has been well-cared for too, and is talkative. Gradually he reveals to us unasked that, in spite of Mr. Buzzacott's influence, who is of course a Radical, he himself is a reactionary Tory. There is too much schooling nowadays, he thinks. Boys can't do naught nor maids neither; soon they'll be too grand to wash their own chemises. Three miles are traversed quickly in listening to these outpourings, and it is only when we reach our door that it occurs to us to count our bag. One cock-pheasant, a venerable bird with spurs an inch long, we left with Mr. Buzzacott, who, we hope for his own sake, will stew it for many hours. Besides that we have four brace of partridges, three woodcock, four snipe, four rabbits, a plover, and a pigeon; and we do not ask for a better day over any country than we have enjoyed over the yellow clay.

THIS is the story of the mine at Ara Tiga in the district of Kinta in the State of Perak. In the beginning Youp-bin Mahomed and Abdullah-bin-Daud his nephew had decided that they would not trouble to irrigate their rice-field, but would leave the water in the dam and sell the fish. Something miscarried, we know not what; at any rate they found it necessary to hold an informal council one evening, squatted on the bamboo floor of Youp's cottage. Between them was a heap of *sirih*-leaves, some morsels of *betel*-nut, and a little pot of quick-lime; over which they discussed the situation, and spoke of pence and halfpence in the gentlest voices and the sweetest language that the tongue of man can compass; each with a quid of tobacco between his lower lip and his front teeth.

"*Aih*, vexation!" said Abdullah. "Money there is none."

"What can we do?" murmured the elder man. "It is the decree of Allah."

A Malay's decision is a thing to be come by only after slow and laborious deliberation. Youp would have been content to review the situation so long as a mouthful of rice and salt fish was left. But young Abdullah was a man of some promptitude (for a Malay), and a month had hardly passed before, at his suggestion, the two were equipped with the necessary

permission to cut *gutta*-trees for six months, and further with two little biting Malay hatchets, a small provision of rice, and a change of clothing. The resourceful Abdullah moreover negotiated a loan of ten dollars from a Chinese miner, in consideration of which he undertook to inform his confiding friend of any promising tin-land that they might happen on in their journeyings. Foolish Youp wanted to go to the expense of Prospecting Licenses, but Abdullah maintained that this law was an unnecessary one, not worth obeying, and he carried his point.

So they set off into the jungle, those two sturdy little brown men, clad in their cotton coats and their tartan *sarongs* (half kilt, half petticoat), and each with his luggage bundled on his back. Day by day they lopped and hewed about them, and in the afternoons they would run up a little shelter of bamboo and palm-leaves, collect the *gutta* from the trees they had felled, and cook their evening rice. They strayed far away from the broad highways and the human life that borders them; and as their business led them ever further and further on, they wandered at last round the mountain foot into a valley where the jungle grew inviolate, save for the uncertain visits of the Sakai, the wild people of the mountain and forest. Timid little creatures are these, and no lovers of notoriety; but the man who discovered the Ara Tiga tin-mine must submit to have notoriety thrust upon him. His name was Blian Tara, and many people have found their names in print who could not rival him in any one of his many accomplish-

<sup>1</sup> Perak is one of the Protected Native States on the west side of the Malay Peninsula. A large proportion of the tin that finds its way into the markets of the world comes from the mines, or rather the alluvial diggings, of these States. They are worked, for the most part, by Chinese immigrants from the province of Canton.

ments; who could not, for example, spit a squirrel at forty yards with a poisoned dart from a blow-gun, and who would be lost and starved in the jungle that is to him the element in which he lives and has his being.

It befell in this wise. Blian Tara had a friend, a brave man and a civilised, one not afraid to venture on the exposed white roads, or even into the rush and tumult of the Chinese mining villages, with wild *durian* fruit to sell. This friend had tempted him to hunt for tin, with promises of wealth in beads and matches and a great white beer-bottle, like that one the tribe had found one memorable day when the surveyor had left the new trigonometrical station on the mountain top.

Accordingly when our two Malays came upon him, he, having taken the plunge from a venatorial to an industrial state of life, was standing in the bed of a rivulet, scraping down earth from the steep bank into the water to try for tin. Now for ten generations his tribe had been harried away from their river homes by the Malay invaders; and though rape and murder had not visited them for full a score of years, and had passed into their spirit-lore, still a great fear fell on the little man when he saw two of his traditional enemies on the bank above him; not a relaxing terror such as loosens your tame man's sinews, but the instinctive stimulating fear of a hunted animal, which flashed in a moment from brain to feet. Before he realised that he was frightened, he was up on the opposite bank and safe in the forest's black tangle of brush-wood; where, returning with a chastened heart to his blow-gun and the hunting of long-tailed monkeys, Blian Tara was not likely, for the remainder of his days, to rouse the anger of the mountain gods by further stealing of their tin-sand.

Abdullah stared for a moment at the black water where it sucked at the fallen bank and swirled on in a yellow stream. Youp swung his bundle from behind his back under his left arm, and after a hasty search produced half a cocoa-nut shell (that unfailing companion of your jungle-farer in the land of tin), and handed it to his nephew saying, "Come, let us try it." Down jumped Abdullah knee-deep into the sludge, with which he filled the shell, kneading and working it with his fingers at the surface of the running water, while he sat a-squat on a flat stone in mid-channel. The lighter mud drifted away like a tawny ribbon on the face of the water; but when the washing was completed there was left such a residuum of grayish-black grains as to make the men stare at each other in wonder, crying, "*Amboi!*" and "*Illahi Allah!*" No tin-lander but would have seen at once the importance of their discovery. Some washings there are that yield their tin in the form of powdery black grains, so light and so mixed with iron-sand that it is a chance if the two do not swim away together from the wash-box. Others, on the contrary, give big angular crystals, that have been carried but a little distance from the matrix, which would be a treasure if they were not so entangled in the sticky clay that the wash-dirt needs puddling before they can be extricated. But here nature had done her work neither in excess nor in defect, and the result promised to be a truly golden mean.

"The hope of mines," saith the Viscount St. Albans, "useth to make the planters [and *gutta*-hunters no less] lazy in other things." Youp and Abdullah felt that to toil further at tree-felling was out of the question. A little further up the stream grew three wild *banians*, or fig-trees, with spreading bushy limbs, which, later on,

were to give the mine its name of Ara Tiga. Here they pitched their camp; and all that afternoon, and far into the night, they chattered together, raising many and elaborate castles into the air.

Any one familiar with the Malay genius will know the long and tortuous process by which he arrives at a decision. We will not attempt therefore to describe in detail how Youp and Abdullah made up their great minds, or recount the interminable arguments, and the endless references to fortune and destiny with which they must certainly have been interspersed. The upshot was that they should turn their backs on the small trader who had advanced the money with which they started, and make an offer of their discovery to the great Chinese miner Lim Ah Fook. Their luck was shining bright; should they neglect to make their hay? In the circumstances they felt that they would be justified in omitting to repay the ten dollars they had borrowed.

Lim Ah Fook (which is Lim the Lucky) lived in T. Square Township, Lot No. 121. His house and those of his neighbours were twenty feet by one hundred and twenty, neither more nor less. From the covered sidewalk on his side of the way to the covered side-walk on the other side, the road was sixty feet broad to an inch. Shady trees flanked the road, spreading their branches in accordance with the bye-laws of the Sanitary Board. At each end of the street where the boundary stones marked its limit, cross-roads ran similar to it in all respects; and at right angles to these and parallel with that, each to each, ran other streets with the same white-washed houses and covered footways, and the same traffic of bullock-carts and *rickishas*. It is the town of the yard-measure, where everything is as new as a mushroom and

as true as a contract surveyor can chain it out; and at the next turning but one it ends abruptly in the Kling Coolie Lines, where the inmates share the cow-dung floor with the cattle that supplied it, and the children play mother-naked in the mud before the door.

But though the house of Lim the Lucky was exactly like his neighbour's, it was better known than most, and well known to the jaded *rickisha*-puller whom our Malays chartered by Abdullah's happy suggestion: "It will be in no wise a loss; the Towkay<sup>1</sup> can pay." Set down before his house they took their courage in their hands and stepped diffidently through the open door into the entrance-hall. "You do the talking," Youp whispered as they went in.

Lim the Fortunate One, the great mine-owner, Visiting Justice, Member of the Sanitary Board, came of a peasant family in the Canton province, Hakkas from the Prefecture of Ka-Yin, north of Swatow. Forty years ago the Taiping rebellion was in full blast in those districts, and between rebels and the government the Lims and their neighbours were hardly pressed. In the end, one side or the other made a clean sweep of the valley of the Lims (traces of the mud walls of their homesteads may be seen to this day), leaving neither woman nor buffalo to till the rice-fields, nor a man, nor a child. Lim the Lucky, so he used to say, alone escaped with a whole skin, by what means is foreign to this story, and found his way to Swatow first, and then to Hong Kong. Thence he was advised to seek a home abroad; and knowing nothing of what lay before him was brought to Penang, and from Penang across to the mainland; and so, by shallow and tangled water-

<sup>1</sup> The ordinary title of prosperous Chinamen throughout the Straits Settlements.

courses, through the dark silences of the jungle into the uplands of Perak. There he and a score of others dug up and washed the surface tin, paying to some Malay princeling (on so much as they could not smuggle past his custom-house) as much as he chose to demand. All this was before the white men came.

Then after some years there was rumour of war and talk of battles won against the infidels; and again after many days there was a gleam of red-coats passing through the jungle.<sup>1</sup> Lim's fellow-countrymen, for the most part, fled or were murdered; but he held on and lived. Another interval, and there appeared a white man who built himself a house, even there in the wilds, and informed all who cared to hear that the white man's law must prevail, and that he had come there to enforce it. This was the turning point of Lim the Lucky's career, when, by one of those instinctive strokes of genius that mark the successful man, in spite of the scoffs and threats of the Malays around him, he sought out the newly appointed Assistant-Magistrate, and threw in his lot with civilisation. And when, in course of time, bridle-paths had spread themselves over the land; and later when metalled roads had superseded the once boasted paths; and last of all when a railway had cut through the hills which the bridle-paths had been content to climb and the cart-roads to circumvent, years after the pioneer magistrate had retired to enjoy his pension at home, while his successors, less knowing in the lore of Malaya but deeply versed in Addison ON CONTRACTS, stirred up the ant-eaten records and laughed at the rough-and-ready old decisions,—while all these

changes were taking place, Lim remained steadfast on the winning side.

And now, at the time of our story, to the Chinamen Lim Ah Fook was a Chinaman, mildly contemptuous of all alien modes of thought and conduct, but at the same time a staunch upholder of constituted authority. To the English he was a sporting old gentleman always ready with his fifty dollar note for the Towkay cup at race-time; but perhaps, if we could have won to his inmost thoughts, we should have found that, though he liked us very well, he was weary of our ways, tired of driving a carriage and pair and lending it to his barbarian friends; and that his heart's longing was to make just one more lucky speculation, and then to go home to the old land, and there to rebuild the old homestead where his forefathers lived, and there to be buried with them on a lucky site, where his son and his son's son should duly worship at his grave. But in spite of the last pious consideration, his son was regularly sent by him to the school established by the Strictly Undenominational Association in T. Square Town; probably in the belief that if with the English and ciphering (undoubted helps to a man through life) anything of the foreign religion should attach itself for the time to the lad's mind, the alien growth would take no firm root there, and would soon drop off again when his school-days were finished.

Our two Malays, as we have said, went in and squatted down on their heels on the middle of the red-tiled floor, like a pair of dusty toads about to hop. "What do you want?" asked Lim the Lucky from his chair. Youp, smitten by the abruptness of the question, could only signal over his shoulder for his nephew's support with a foolish and appealing smile. Abdullah, more prompt, drew in his

<sup>1</sup> The Perak War of 1875, which resulted in the country being reduced to the position of a Protected State.



breath and ejaculated, "*Anu*, what d'ye call it?" The Towkay waited for something more definite, and at last Youp, with an effort, said in a stage whisper, "Perhaps the Towkay would buy our *gutta*," and made as if he would undo the bundle on his back. "Ah, he wouldn't buy," Abdullah answered, following his lead.

The Towkay waited, his sharp black eyes peering out through their setting of crows'-feet, wrinkled in a long experience of the ways of men. He lit his little water-pipe and puffed thrice, detached the bowl, and blew out the ash. Then he relit it in a leisurely manner. The silence grew embarrassing. "*Bilang-lah*! ah, tell him," Youp murmured in tones as hushed and sweet as a lullaby. "*Anu*," Abdullah repeated with an effort, "*Anu*, Towkay. . . . There is a little matter. *Na*! Look, Towkay!" Here he produced the tin-seeds wrapped up in a piece of green plantain-leaf. "We found it, we two men, and a *tahil* of ore in every cocoanut-shell of dirt. And then, says I, wondrous beautiful tin-seed indeed is this. And then, says he, it would be right to give it to the Towkay." "Where did you get it?" asked Lim the Lucky. "*Nun*, over there," quoth Abdullah, pointing, as a Malay will, with extended chin, through a vague half of the horizon. "How far away?" "Not far; peradventure rather near by. Is it not so?" And Youp grinned his assent.

But it would be beyond all reasonable limits to tell by what arguments the Malays persuaded the speculative Chinaman to enter into partnership with themselves on the land, to deposit the survey-fees, pay the land-rent, and bear all charges in connection with the said land. It must be imagined how they went together to the Land Officer sitting at receipt of custom,

hot and flushed in the cool white office. To him Lim paid the amount demanded without a question, while Abdullah returned five times to make quite sure that his name had not been fraudulently omitted from the application-form.

So in due course the land was inspected, and a perspiring surveyor, with demarcation coolies and a theodolite, drove the outraged monkey-people trooping up the mountain. The partners were put in possession, and Lim, having prospected his land, found it rich beyond his hopes and bought out his partners. These spent their new-won fortunes as fate directed. Youp went on the great pilgrimage and died of cholera by a well-side at Mecca; but Abdullah married a new wife, and invested in a red plush cap and a pair of blue silk drawers, and is on the high road to become a man of dignity and consequence. Last came D. the expert, who tells the Government why the tin is found where it is found; and he reported on the new field with grudging praise and gloomy prophecies. But all, who were not experts, agreed that if D. had been one of Joshua's spies he would have brought back a depressing report of the Promised Land; and so no one heeded him.

We make no pretence to have come by the whole of what we have here tried to describe, by the evidence of our own eyes and ears. On the contrary it will be obvious that we have cobbled together shreds of information so collected with patches of guess-work, for the crudeness of which we ask the indulgence of the reader, who will bear in mind how difficult it is for a European, though living in the country and grown more or less familiar with its language, to arrive at any real insight into the inner chambers of an Oriental mind.

Our proper knowledge of the Ara Tiga mine dates from a day when, in company with old Towkay Lim, we paid it a visit of inspection some two years ago. We dropped down the river in a dug-out, one afternoon, to a point whence his tin was sent downstream to Anson's Bay, the port from which the tin of the Perak River districts is brought to Singapore. From this point we walked to the mine, over a four-mile track that Lim had cut through the forest. The bullock-carts with slabs of tin, that we met as they ploughed through the heavy way or over the still green branches with which the worst quags were corduroyed, were enough to show that the mine was flourishing. But before we reached the clearing, the drum had called the coolies to their evening rice : an endless procession of flying foxes was passing across the afterglow on the way to their breakfast of fruit ; and it was too late to do more that night than wonder, over a cigar, at the change that had befallen the jungle. What did the woodland spirits think of it all, their silences disturbed, their trees cut down, and five hundred foreign Vandals intruded into their haunts ; and what of the donkey-engine puffing red sparks into the moonlight, as it gasped and whirred and for ever sucked the water from the pit ? What would the Orang Bunyi say, the Good Folk that are Heard ? Would they decimate the Chinamen with shivering malaria ; or bewitch the tin-sand, and trick the silly miner into throwing it aside for worthless *amang* ?<sup>1</sup>

But by daylight there is nothing romantic in a Perak tin-mine ; only a sort of pitifulness in the sight of so much honest timber cut down and burned to no useful enriching of the land, such as results, for example,

<sup>1</sup> *Amang* is the Malay term for a fine black sand often found with the tin.

when a garden of coffee grows green and bushy out of the decay of the slaughtered forest. The jungle has been felled over a rectangle as big, say, as Trafalgar Square, while beyond the sharp-cut boundary lines it stands intact, in a hollow square of tree-trunks that run down smooth and naked from their gray tops of foliage to the ground. The starved undergrowths have not yet had time to take full advantage of the sudden inrush of sunlight, and give to their spindle stems a lustier development. But the border line between forest and clearing has already been planted with bush grasses, icy cold with dew of a morning before the sun has dried them ; and before two years are over, broadening patches of *nipah* palms, and flat-leaved tree-ferns, and giant *cal-ladia* with fleshy leaves, and travelling tangles of *rattan* and creeper, will be banked fifty feet high against the forest edge.

At one end of the clearing are the Coolie Lines, or *kongsi*-houses, as we call them, being long sheds of split logs loosely wattled together and covered by a high peaked roof of palm-leaf. Here live the miners, each gang under its headman. There are half-a-dozen of these lines, each perhaps forty yards long. Ducks and swine grope in the mud of the uncleanly alleys between them for a livelihood. Some Malay must lately have brought in a crate of *durians*, for spiky husks (like those of a horse-chestnut, as big as a thirty-six pound shot), are lying in heaps on every side, and putrify the morning air with their stench ; a patch of garden ground in a corner gives contrast by its neatness and clear colours to the dirt and squalor around, and exhibits its cabbages and onions and many other vegetables in geometrical rows and beds. Here somebody, naked but for a pair of patched blue drawers, his pig-tail twisted

round his head, is watering the plants with some odious decoction.

Towkay Lim conveyed us through this pestilential village to the mine, which was towards the centre of the clearing, by a path wandering among the heaps of refuse thrown aside before the pay-dirt below could be won. We were then at the very spot where the Malays first struck the tin. The bed of the stream was gone, and its waters were doing hard labour at the wash-boxes; but there were the three great fig-trees to mark the place, with the sand heaped within their ring of shadow up to the column of aerial roots, and desecrated by an incongruous altar and a daily fusillade of crackers. For the Chinese coolie has a firm belief in the Malay devils' devils.

And so we came to the edge of the mine, or paddock as it is called, which after all is nothing but a broad open pit with sloping sides, and perhaps some forty or fifty feet in depth; a poor thing in the eyes of any one expecting shafts and machinery, and the elaboration of western methods, but sufficient for its purpose, as Chinese methods are apt to be. Three hundred men clad in loose blue coats and drawers, and plaited sun-hats three feet across, are digging up the pay-dirt at the bottom of the pit with great hoes, and putting it on flat wicker baskets; others catch up the baskets, slung one at either end of a yoke, and balancing the load across the shoulder, they carry them up to the level ground (vibrating in time with their steps) by narrow tree-trunks, notched with foot-holes, which are placed at short intervals athwart the sloping sides of the pit. Having gained the higher level, they throw down their burdens by the wash-boxes and descend by other bridges at a steady trot, in a silent, orderly, and unbroken stream. The men at the wash-boxes, which

are long sloping troughs of wood, throw in the dirt, and by raking it back and back under a nicely regulated flow of water, they separate the black tin sand from the spoil, and shovel it into tubs ready for the smelting-house, while the spoil is flung down the slope of the hither side of the paddock. At the opposite side a gang is removing tree-stumps and clearing the surface ready to be nibbled away in that direction; and by this process, slowly and day by day, the paddock will creep across the clearing, leaving no tin behind it worth the washing between the top-soil and the bed-rock. In the meanwhile, here and there, in the remoter corners of the clearing, little curls of smoke rise among the prostrate trees, showing where the burners are engaged in the twofold operation of getting rid of the felled jungle and preparing charcoal for the smelting-house. The engine we heard the night before is sucking up the accumulation of water from the pit's bottom, where it is a hindrance, and passing it to its sphere of usefulness at the wash-boxes. The constant rhythm of its vibrations seems to harmonise well with the orderliness of the scene. There is little or no talking; every band of coolies works in its own place, knowing with what a fury of wielded hoes it would be greeted should it stray by a foot beyond the hanging thread that marks its province; for the laws of the mining commonwealth are strict, and in some respects they are as quaint as they are strict. Towkay Lim would be as likely to call us a foreign devil to our face as to outrage the tin-sprites and his own coolies by going down his mine with black shoes on. Should a hoe slip in unlucky hands, the coolie must speak of *the fortunate* oozing from the wounded foot, never of *blood*; to use that word

would be to make himself unpopular, and it is ill to be unpopular in a mining town.

At nine o'clock the breakfast-gong sounds its welcome rattle. Down go hoe and basket, and away swarm the men up the narrow gangways like a swarm of ants along so many straws. They run off with laughter and horse-play and shrill cries. No taciturn, unimpressionable stoics these, as some have crudely fancied, hastily ascribing to a whole nation the mannerisms of their domestic servants; no patient slaves, but a rough pack of adventurers, who when they have struck rich soil can tell to a cent the value of their nine-tenths' share of the output, and who are quite ready to spend what they win in such luxuries as they know of. So they revel in fowl and pork, take as many holidays as they please, gamble, drink, smoke *chandu*, and are as noisy and riotous as they dare to be. Light come, light go; a short life and a merry is the word.

They have come together from the breadth of two provinces; and half a thousand families scattered over Kwang-Tung and Fuhkien are daily wondering at their whereabouts, and waiting for their return. So that if nothing human is alien from our sympathies, we shall find more in the mine to interest us than kaolin and stannic-oxide and granite detritus mixed together in an ugly hole; if indeed anything can be ugly under a tropical sun, that, like a philosopher's stone, turns all it touches into precious metal, subliming drabs and grays into burnished silver, and the dingiest brown into old gold.

The same sun has, besides, the property of striking a man under the eaves of his pith-hat with its slanting rays, to much the same effect as when a poacher breaks the neck of a snared rabbit with the edge of his hand. So

we turned our backs on the now deserted mine, and made our way to the smelting-shed, where the furnace, a pot-bellied monster of clay like a water-butt, belched forth a column of blue flame each time the man at the six-foot piston-rod of the bellows ran with it to or fro. It straddled on three iron legs over a hole, into which the outcome of the ore and charcoal it was fed with flowed in a dribble of white-hot tin. This, as fast as it fell, was baled away by the streaming workmen into moulds, from which, as it cooled, it emerged in ingots of a hundredweight apiece.

Outside the shed these ingots were being laded into the bullock-carts, under charge of a Sikh watchman, all whiskers and severity, who was pleased to salute the Sahib and address him in the high, weak voice of his kind. And after their kind cringed the black Kling cartmen, in a humility of oil and nakedness. A chance Malay, with heads of Indian corn for sale, squatted on his heels and surveyed us with half-open eyes and mouth, from the standpoint of one who is willing to admire any show so it be free. And the busy Chinese *shroff* told his slabs into the cart without twice regarding either his employer or us. So we stood, representing five races from over half the world, drawn by the Spirit of the Tin together for a moment into that remote corner of the Malay Peninsula.

Presently the cart was laden. With blows and curses the reluctant bullocks were pushed sideways under the yoke. "*Da!*" cried the driver, and the cart creaked off on its way, with much labouring and wallowing among the heaps of sand. It was time for us also to go. "Towkay, we are going home; *Tabek* (farewell), Towkay," said we, as we shook hands. But as we turned the corner he made a shift to run after us, shaking and

grinning all over his fat person. "*Tuan*,"<sup>1</sup> said he, "I ask for help a little. Really they ought to metal a road for me next year. Then, perhaps, if my luck holds good, I shall go home," said Lim the Lucky.

Soon afterwards we had occasion to leave the Straits for the best part of two years, and Towkay Lim and his tin-mine passed away from our memory, or at any rate from our thoughts. When we came back, D. the prophet was one of the first men we happened upon; and of him, stirred by association of ideas, we asked the latest news of the mine at Ara Tiga. D. started, "You don't mean old What's-his-name's?" says he. "Why that reverted to Government years ago! It could not pay. It was patchy; it was bound to be patchy, so far from the hills. I put that on paper at the beginning." This he added with a sort of grim ecstasy.

And then we learned that Lim the Lucky had also reverted, or, as a Malay would put it, had returned to the compassion of God. So, because life in the far East is too full of changes and chances for much mourning over dead men or dead mines, we confess that in all probability we should have thought little more of poor old Lim and his last venture had not fate, and a coffee-planter prowling for land, brought us not long after upon the old road to Ara Tiga (still discernible, but man-high in underwood), and we were led by curiosity to see what traces might be left of the abandoned works.

<sup>1</sup> *Tuan* is the word ordinarily used in addressing Europeans in the Malay Peninsula.

The *kongsi*-houses, all but one, lay prone on the earth, half hidden by a nursery of scrub and saplings. The patch of garden had been ploughed by the wild-pig and replanted by the jungle with its own seed. The floor of the one remaining shed was green with weeds, and the sunshine was streaming on it through the broken roof in uneven patches. As we stood there, a bronzed and burnished lizard rustled past us, flickered across the light, and vanished in a corner. Some framework fixtures of the sleeping-benches were left, and there was still the old tablet to the Dragon. But the powers of the jungle had proved greater than he, from the white ant that had eaten the heart out of the timbers, to the elephant that had brushed them down with the friction of his rugged sides.

The sand-heaps before the mine were hidden under coarse grass, yellow in the sunshine, and the paddock itself was half full of sea-green water, into which a little tortoise, resenting our approach, dropped with a hollow splash. The hush of the jungle, that silence audible, with its infinity of faint sounds, lay heavy on the day. The cicadas chirruped their endless song: an invisible frog at our feet croaked suddenly and then stopped, as if on second thoughts he preferred to keep his ideas to himself; and the melancholy bird, that knows four notes of the scale and gets too sharp at the fourth and tries again, was engaged in a mournful competition with the one that can whistle two bars only of the QUEEN OF MY HEART waltz. The jungle is a ghostly place even at mid-day.



## UNFINISHED BOOKS.

BROWSING among one's books in a desultory fashion is frequently one of the most enjoyable of employments, but like all delights there is a tinge of melancholy in it. The sources of gladness and of tears are strangely near, and bookish reveries are often productive of

That sweet mood when pleasant thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

We scan the path along which the great ones of thought and speech have journeyed while they were allowed to remain with us, and we can trace the footprints they have left. There are footprints steady and undisturbed making straight for a certain goal; others hasty and impetuous, stumbling, and with blurred and confused impression; some wandering and feeble, irresolute and slow, circling vainly on the sands of Time and finally becoming so faint as to leave no indelible trace; and some imprinted red with the blood of a broken life.

And here and there we find on the trodden pathway a scroll unfinished, thrown down, perhaps, with a line half written when the writer was called away. The world, we know, is full of broken columns; and the smaller world of letters is full also of treasured fragments, beginnings without an end, imperfect embodiments of great conceptions.

It seems strange that we should regard *THE FAIRY QUEEN* as a fragment; yet so it is, a colossal fragment. Of course there is a sense in which each of its books is almost complete in itself, and the line of the poet's allegory is not so straight and sequacious as to suffer much by interruption;

indeed *THE FAIRY QUEEN* is quite as much a whole as most long poems, but this does not alter the fact that it is but a partial carrying out of a gigantic undertaking, whose great end was, to use the poet's own words, "to fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline."

When in 1590 he published the first three books of his great work, Spenser gave in an introductory letter a kind of prospectus of the whole poem: "*THE FAIRY QUEEN* disposed into twelve books fashioning twelve moral virtues." After showing that he was following the example of "all the antique poets historical," Homer, Virgil, Ariosto, and Tasso, he goes on: "I labour to pourtray in Arthur before he was king the image of a brave knight perfected in the twelve private moral virtues as Aristotle hath devised, the which is the purpose of these first twelve books." This scheme, dealing with "that part which they in philosophy call Ethic," was, one would think, a sufficiently large undertaking for one man to attack, but Spenser's sanguine nature went still further. If "I find these first twelve books to be well accepted," he says, "I may be perhaps encouraged to frame the other part of politic virtues, in his person [Arthur's] after that he came to be king."

Here is a plan indeed, worthy of the days of the Saurians of English poetry, as Mr. Lowell described them, which "lie floating many a rood" in our early literature. Twelve on the ethical and probably twelve on the political side of the character, in all twenty-four books,—surely a plan well nigh impossible of accomplishment.

When the lines of this vast enterprise were laid down the poet produced three books as an earnest of what was to follow. These, and a second instalment of three books six years later, were all that he was fated to leave us. It is true there is a tradition, born many years after Spenser's death, that the remaining six books (of the ethical part) were completed, but burned in the flames that destroyed Kilcolman Castle, or lost in the anxiety and tumult of the poet's flight from an insurgent country; and it is very possible that at least a portion of them was finished in the two years that elapsed between the publication of the second three books and his death; but whether unwritten, or written and lost, there remain to us only two cantos of the seventh book, published in 1611, twelve years after Spenser had left for ever the worries and the dangers and the poetry of life. That he intended to carry out his design to the end, if spared to do so, we can gather from several references in his works, notably from his eightieth sonnet, which begins:

After so long a race as I have run  
Through Fairy land, which those six  
books compile,  
Give leave to rest me being half fordone  
And gather to myself new breath awhile.  
Then, as a steed refreshèd after toil,  
Out of my prison I will break anew;  
And stoutly will that second work assoyle  
With strong endeavour and attention due.

We can fancy that Spenser must have thought wistfully of that sonnet when he lay dying on a tavern-bed in Westminster, poor and comparatively neglected, leaving his song half sung and his reputation to the mercy of the Blatant Beast of which he himself had said,

Nor spareth he the gentle poet's rhyme  
But rends without regard of person or  
of time.

There are several examples of authors

having conceived an idea of such magnitude that it became hopeless for a single hand to accomplish it. Raleigh's great attempt at a History of the World is of this nature. Although he toiled at it for years in all the retirement and quiet that the Tower of London afforded, and although, as Jonson hinted to Drummond, he was assisted by some of the ablest writers of the time, he was still unable to bring the narrative quite down to the commencement of the Christian era.

The work to which Buckle devoted his life is another case in point. His aim was to trace the History of Civilisation, and from an early age he set himself to that stupendous undertaking. For twenty years he worked, in silence and unknown, and then published three volumes which at once raised him from obscurity to the position he deserved. But his book, though long, was only an introduction to his great scheme, a mere study for the important picture he had planned. Yet it was all that he was destined to perform. Worn out by his efforts he went to the East in search of fresh vigour, and passed away at Damascus, exclaiming, in his last moments of consciousness, "My book, my book! I shall never finish my book!"

The reason why Macaulay's History embraces so small a portion of our country's annals is not only that the scale on which he worked was so large as to admit of no other result, but also that it was not undertaken until comparatively late in life. An intensely active career, divided between literature and the business of the State, had been spent before he had leisure and means sufficient to enable him to devote himself to this single work. His life had been passed in the accumulation of a stock of learning so rich and so vast that his history, if it had extended over two or three more reigns, would have been

one of the wonders of the world. Even as it stands, and in spite of all the charges levelled at it, it remains a magnificent fragment.

Although Macaulay was born in 1800, it was not until the close of 1848 that the first two volumes of his History appeared. The next two followed seven years later, the length of the interval being easily explained by the prodigious amount of labour and research needed to fashion the narrative as we now possess it. There is an entry in his diary, dated February 8th, 1849, that is very interesting in this connection. He is laying down the lines which he means to follow in working up to the next stage of his History, and he says :

I have now made up my mind to change my plan about my History. I will first set myself to know the whole subject: to get by reading and travelling a full acquaintance with William's reign. I reckon that it will take me eighteen months to do this. I must visit Holland, Belgium, Scotland, Ireland, France. The Dutch archives and French archives must be ransacked. . . . I must see Londonderry, the Boyne, Aghrim, Limerick, Kinsale, Namur again, Landen, Steinkirk. I must turn over hundreds, thousands of pamphlets. Lambeth, the Bodleian, and the other Oxford Libraries, the Devonshire papers, the British Museum must be explored and notes made: and then I shall go to work. When the materials are ready and the History mapped out in my mind, I ought easily to write on an average two of my pages daily. In two years from the time I begin writing I shall have more than finished my second part. Then I reckon a year for polishing, retouching, and printing. This brings me to the autumn of 1853.

The estimated time was exceeded by two years. Although, like Raleigh, he laboured terribly, although he practically absented himself from society, although he abandoned all correspondence save with his family, and at last had not leisure even for his diary, the materials to be collected

were so vast that the third and fourth volumes occupied him for seven years. He himself said that his History gave him so much to do that he had no leisure and little inclination for anything else: "I am a prisoner to my room, or nearly so. I do nothing but write and read." But his devotion to his book was not without its reward, and on November 21st, 1855, he could write: "I looked over and sent off the last twenty pages. My work is done, thank God; and now for the result."

But his work was not done yet, although the strain had told severely on his physical powers. Almost a year elapsed between the publication of the second part and the commencement of the third. This was not like the Macaulay of the old days, who had no sooner finished one work than he was ready stripped for its successor. At last in October, 1856, he settled down again in earnest, though doubtful enough in his mind as to the conclusion. "God knows," he writes, "whether I shall ever finish this part. I begin it with little heart or hope;" and again a few months later: "I find it difficult to settle to my work. . . . The chief reason I believe is the great doubt I feel whether I shall live long enough to finish another volume of my book." He had hoped to bring his account at least to the end of the reign of Anne, but his imperious mind had to give way to physical weakness, and he was obliged to leave even William's reign incomplete.

Speaking of Buckle's great undertaking Macaulay once said that he was a man whom Bacon might have described as an anticipator, and the remark may serve to suggest another instance of a colossal attempt never brought to completion, Bacon's own *INSTAURATIO MAGNA*. Of the six books of which it was to consist only

three were ever written, *THE ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING*, *NOVUM ORGANON*, and *HISTORIA NATURALIS ET EXPERIMENTALIS*. The other three remain in the limbo of projection. They were thus announced by the author: (4.) *LADDER OF THE UNDERSTANDING*. (5.) *PRECURSORS, OR ANTICIPATORS, OF THE SECOND PHILOSOPHY*. (6.) *SECOND PHILOSOPHY, OR ACTIVE SCIENCE*; and were introduced by him in very quaint style: "Francis of Verulam thought thus, and such is the method which he determined within himself, and which he thought it concerned the living and posterity to know." The invocation with which he closed his announcement one is tempted to quote in this connection if only for the sake of the beauty of the language in which it is couched:

May Thou therefore, O Father, who gavest the light of vision as the first-fruit of creation, and who hast spread over the fall of man the light of Thy understanding as the accomplishment of Thy works, guard and direct this work, which, issuing from Thy goodness, seeks in return Thy glory! When Thou hadst surveyed the works which Thy hands had wrought, all seemed good in Thy sight, and Thou restedst. But when man turned to the works of his hands, he found all vanity and vexation of spirit, and experienced no rest. If, however, we labour in Thy works, Thou wilt make us to partake of Thy vision and sabbath; we, therefore, humbly beseech Thee to strengthen our purpose, that Thou mayest be willing to endow Thy family of mankind with new gifts, through our hands, and the hands of those in whom Thou shalt implant the same spirit.

Bacon's curious account of an imaginary republic which he called *THE NEW ATLANTIS* is also left in an imperfect state.

But there are many works which do not owe their incomplete condition to the tremendous area which their plans embrace. Indolence or irresolution is often the reason why efforts begun in eager and flushed excitement

lose their charm over the author's mind and are allowed to lapse. The works of Gray afford one or two examples of this. Of his earliest work *AGRIPPINA*, which was to have been a tragedy in blank verse, he wrote rather less than two hundred lines. His friend West, to whom he submitted the manuscript, thought the style too antiquated, and Gray carried it no further. It was a different reason that led to the laying aside of the fragment beginning,

As sickly plants betray a niggard earth.

This poem, which labours under the depressing title *THE ALLIANCE OF EDUCATION AND GOVERNMENT*, and of which only about a hundred lines were written, he did not finish (to use his own words to Norton Nicholls) "because he could not." When his friend expressed surprise at this he explained, "that he had been used to write only lyric poetry, in which, the poems being short, he had accustomed himself and was able to polish every part, and that the labour of this method in a long poem would be intolerable." The poem is not one of his best; but it has passages that make one wish he had imposed on himself the "intolerable" labour of finishing it.

Keats also left a considerable number of unfinished poems, though not through indolence, as was the case with Gray.

Cut was the branch that might have  
grown full straight,  
And burned was Apollo's laurel bough.

The most important of these, *HYPERION*, was thrown aside because of its "Miltonic inversions" and generally Miltonic cast, and not (as the publisher announced) because the public had pronounced unfavourably upon *ENDYMION*. Here again is a great canvas stretched out. The overthrow of the Saturnian gods by

the Olympian, and the wars of the Giants, offered sufficient material in all conscience for an epic; but Keats thought that the poem had grown too imitative and would have no more of it. It seems to be generally agreed that he was right, although there can be no question but that the fragment, as it stands, is essentially lofty and magnificent. To Byron it seemed "actually inspired by the Titans and as sublime as *Æschylus*." Perhaps if Keats, against his own convictions and better inspiration, had finished the poem, it might not have been so impressive as it is.

Of *KING STEPHEN* only three or four scenes were ever written, written in this case by Keats alone without the help of the friend who had provided the plot of *OTHO THE GREAT*, too little upon which to form an elaborate judgment of the poet's dramatic power, but enough to show that in that direction did not lie his predominant gifts. There is more left of the *CAP AND BELLS*, which is a kind of poetical burlesque. Keats called it a fairy tale, and Charles Brown (the friend aforesaid) says that it was begun without a plan and written "subject to future amendments and omissions." It is surprising that this piece, which he composed, we are told, with extreme facility, should have been begun just after the commencement of his fatal illness. Probably it was written to relieve a mind overstrained, to get away, as Lord Houghton has said, as far as possible "from the gross realities that occupied and tormented his existence." At any rate it is written in a jaunty, reckless tone, seemingly without any serious intent; it is probably the least valuable of any of his longer writings, although it contains, of course, several felicitous turns of thought and fancy.

His *EVE OF SAINT MARK* was begun at about the same time as *THE EVE*

OF SAINT AGNES; but while he completed the latter legend, the former was for some reason or other allowed to remain in a very fragmentary state. It is written in octosyllabic couplets, not one of his characteristic metres, and in its apparent simplicity and real richness occasionally recalls Coleridge's *CHRISTABEL*. The old tradition ran that whosoever watched at a church-porch after sunset on the Eve of Saint Mark, would see the appearances of such of his friends as were destined to ill-health during the following year. These apparitions entered the church; if they returned it was a sign that the persons they represented would recover, the length of their sojourn in the church betokening the duration and severity of the sickness; if they did not return, the sickness would be fatal. Taking this story as his motive, the poet began a description of a maiden named Bertha, living within sound of the chimes of an old cathedral, reading upon a Sabbath day the aforesaid legend from an ancient book,

A curious volume, patched and torn,  
That all day long from earliest morn  
Had taken captive her two eyes.

It is a delightful and tantalising fragment, marked by a reserve and simplicity such as Keats did not often care to exercise. The difference between its style and the sensuous, overflowing luxuriance of many of his poems can be seen from such lines as these.

Bertha arose, and read awhile  
With forehead 'gainst the window pane.  
Again she tried, and then again,  
Until the dusk eve left her dark  
Upon the legend of Saint Mark.  
From plaited lawn-frill, fine and thin,  
She lifted up her soft warm chin,  
With aching neck and swimming eyes  
And dazed with saintly imag'ries.

All was silent, all was gloom,  
Abroad and in the homely room:  
Down she sat, poor cheated soul!  
And struck a lamp from the dismal coal;



Leaned forward, with bright drooping  
hair  
And slant book, full against the glare.  
Her shadow, in uneasy guise,  
Hovered about, a giant size,  
On ceiling-beam and old oak chair.

When we remember that he who could write graphically and simply like this could also use the broader touch and more lavish colours of *THE EVE OF SAINT AGNES* and *ENDYMION*, our admiration of his marvellous powers increases ten-fold, and with it our pity for what men call his premature death.

It is doubtful whether any number of years would have sufficed to finish *DON JUAN*. Indeed it is difficult to see how such a work ever could, in any circumstances, have been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. Byron might have written *finis* at the end of the twentieth or thirtieth canto if he had lived; but the poem could hardly have been finished in any other sense.

Nothing so difficult as a beginning  
In poesy, unless perhaps the end.

Its plan was so wide, the subjects dealt with so various, the changes of mood so many and so sudden, and the progress of the story so slight, that Byron was almost justified in saying in the middle of the twelfth canto :

But now I will begin my poem. 'Tis  
Perhaps a little strange, if not quite  
new,  
That from the first of Cantos up to this  
I've not begun what we have to go  
through.  
These first twelve books are merely  
flourishes,  
Preludios, trying just a string or two  
Upon my lyre, or making the pegs sure ;  
And when so, you shall have the overture.

And again :

I thought, at setting off, about two dozen  
Cantos would do ; but at Apollo's  
pleading,  
If that my Pegasus should not be found-  
er'd,  
I think to canter gently through a hun-  
dred.

No. 438.—VOL. LXXIII.

As a matter of fact he never proceeded beyond the sixteenth. He began the poem in Venice, the first canto being written towards the end of 1818, and the next three in the succeeding year. Then, at the solicitations of his female friends, and especially of the Countess Guiccioli (whose influence with him then was paramount), he laid aside for a time the story of "that horrid wearisome Don," and in September, 1820, could write to Murray about it in this strain : "I do not feel inclined to care further about Don Juan. What do you think a very pretty Italian lady said to me the other day ? She had read it in the French, and paid me some compliments with due drawbacks upon it. I answered that what she said was true, but that I suspected it would live longer than Childe Harold. 'Ah, but' (said she), 'I would rather have the fame of Childe Harold for three years than an immortality of Don Juan.'" At a later date, however, he took up the manuscript again, "having obtained," as he told Murray, "a permission from my dictatress to continue it—provided always it was to be more guarded and decorous and sentimental in the continuation than in the commencement. How far these conditions have been fulfilled," he went on, "may be seen, perhaps, by and by ; but the embargo was only taken off upon these stipulations." Certainly it was seen, but whether the dictatress remonstrated again is not known. Meanwhile the poem proceeded on its leisurely course, *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*, as Campbell aptly described it, showing on every page how true was the poet's own criticism.

The fact is, that I have nothing  
plann'd,  
Unless it were to be a moment merry,  
A novel word in my vocabulary.

Seven more cantos were added in 1822 at Pisa, and the remainder up

to the sixteenth at Genoa in 1823. A few stanzas still remain in manuscript, concluding the interview between Juan and her frolic Grace Fitz-Fulke, and that ends it,—a poem of some sixteen thousand lines without the slightest indication of an approaching conclusion.

In turning next to Ben Jonson we write of a man far removed from Keats and Byron both by time and temper; but the suddenness of the transition will be less noticeable if, instead of thinking of the great Elizabethan as the dramatist of *THE PORT-ASTER* and *BARTHOLOMEW FAIR*, we approach him as the poet of many exquisite lyrics and as the author of *THE SAD SHEPHERD*. This unfinished pastoral was found by his literary executors among his papers and published in its incompleteness. Two acts and the beginning of the third are all that we have, but they show Jonson at his best. In its nature, and its execution, it is far more poetical (using that word in a well understood sense) than most of his work. Outside his lyrics, indeed, it would not be easy to match the delicate charm of the lines in which *Æglamour* praises the fresh beauties of his love.

Earine,  
Who had her very being, and her name,  
With the first knots or buddings of the  
spring,  
Born with the primrose and the violet,  
Or earliest roses blown;

or of these, again, where Jonson, borrowing something from Virgil, has employed a figure which has since obtained almost universal currency among our poets down to Tennyson:

Here was she wont to go! and here!  
and here!  
Just where those daisies, pinks, and  
violets grow:  
The world may find the Spring by  
following her;  
For other print her airy steps ne'er left.

Her treading would not bend a blade of  
grass,  
Or shake the downy blow-ball from his  
stalk!  
But like the soft west wind she shot  
along,  
And where she went the flowers took  
thickest root.

It has been commonly supposed that this was the work of Jonson's last years, on the strength of a line in the prologue which refers to his having been a playwright for forty years. But the evidence is not, we think, conclusive; and it is certainly hard to believe this play to be the product of a palsied and bedridden old age. It is at least possible that *THE SAD SHEPHERD* may be a part of that pastoral entitled *THE MAY LORD*, which Jonson told Drummond of Hawthornden he had written. According to this theory *THE MAY LORD* had perhaps been finished in prose by the time Jonson visited Drummond (we know he was in the habit of composing first in prose), and had been translated into verse only up to the point at which it now leaves off. Then for some cause it was put aside, and not taken up again by the poet until his old age, when he began to adapt it for the stage, inserted the line in the prologue,

He that hath feasted you these forty years,  
and might perhaps have finished turning the prose outline into verse if death had not supervened. Of course there are objections that can be urged against this theory, otherwise it would not be a theory; but all things considered it appears to be no improbable solution of a difficult question.

Perhaps no one has obtained such a high reputation by reason of such fragmentary work as Coleridge. Not to speak of those poems which he only planned and never attempted to execute (and they are legion) there are still at least four important poems left in different stages of imperfection, *THE*

THREE GRAVES, THE WANDERINGS OF CAIN, THE BALLAD OF THE DARK LADIE, and CHRISTABEL. One of these fragments gave Charles Lamb the hint for a joke at his friend's foible. In perhaps the most whimsical of all his delightful letters, to Manning in China, by way of upbraiding him for his long exile he affects to warn him that when he does return he must expect to see no more of the old familiar faces; Mary, Martin Burney, Godwin, Coleridge, Wordsworth,—all are gone. "Poor Col., but two days before he died he wrote to a bookseller proposing an epic poem on the WANDERINGS OF CAIN in twenty-four books. It is said he has left behind him more than forty thousand treatises in criticism, metaphysics, and divinity, but few of them in a state of completion." Never was there a writer whose performances bore such a small proportion to his promises, and if he had carried out all his projects and filled in all his outlines, he would have been one of the most voluminous writers in the whole dynasty of poets.

One of the gravest charges that may be brought against Coleridge by a disciple is his persistent neglect of CHRISTABEL. Of the poem containing the story of that interesting maiden we have but two cantos or parts, the only two that were ever written, and these were not published until 1816. And yet, as Coleridge's preface informs us, the first part was actually written in 1797, and the second in 1800. He mentions this to clear himself from a charge of plagiarism, and to show that, though later in appearance, his poem was antecedent in date to the works of Scott and Byron composed in a similar metre, the first part at any rate having circulated in manuscript many years before its public appearance.

The paragraph in the aforesaid

preface is eminently characteristic of the author. "As in my very first conception of the tale," he writes, "I had the whole present to my mind with the wholeness no less than with the liveliness of a vision, I trust I shall be able to embody in verse the three parts yet to come, *in the course of the present year.*" In the edition of 1828 the whole sentence was repeated with the exception of the words we have italicised. If, then, this was the case, why did he not finish it, or at least set himself to the task? In opposition to Coleridge's statement we have the evidence of Wordsworth, who declared that in his belief the author had never "conceived in his own mind any definite plan for it . . . . he had never heard from him any plan for finishing it." Wordsworth did not doubt the sincerity of his friend when he asserted the contrary; "but," said he, "schemes of this sort passed rapidly and vividly through his mind, and so impressed him that he often fancied he had arranged things which really and upon trial proved to be mere embryos." That Wordsworth was right may be gathered from the fact that, while in the original preface Coleridge speaks of the plan as being quite perfected in his mind, he writes at another time: "If I should finish CHRISTABEL I should certainly extend it and give new characters and a greater number. . . . If a genial recurrence of the ray divine should occur for a few weeks I shall certainly attempt it. I had the whole of the two cantos in my mind before I began it." And yet again in 1833, the year before he died, he returns to the old subject: "The reason of my not finishing CHRISTABEL is not that I did not know how to do it, for I have, as I always had, the whole plan entirely from beginning to end in my mind; but I fear I could not carry out with

equal success the execution of the idea, an extremely subtle and difficult one."

Gillman gives a sketch of the remainder of the poem which he declares it was the intention of the poet to follow. In it is related how the supernatural Geraldine is obliged to cease the impersonation of the daughter of Lord Roland de Vaux, and changes her appearance to that of the absent accepted lover of Christabel. The Baron and his daughter, though uneasy, are both unsuspecting of the charm, and the marriage between Christabel and the serpent-woman is about to take place when the real suitor enters. Amid general consternation Geraldine disappears (like *Lamia* in Keats's poem), the castle-bell tolls, the voice of Christabel's mother is heard in fulfilment of the old prophecy, and the rightful marriage is celebrated. Whether this is the actual scheme that Coleridge had floating before his mind's eye can never be known; nor do we know exactly whether to regret that the poem was never finished. Certainly we should all regret a conclusion unworthy of the first two cantos. Lamb, indeed, was content with the first, and was afraid that any addition would spoil it: "I was very angry," he writes, "when I first heard that he had written a second canto, and that he intended to finish it." An attempt was made to complete it by another hand, in 1815, before the actual publication of the first parts; and another similar attempt appeared in *BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE* for June 1819, signed Morgan O'Doherty, and understood to be by Maginn. Coleridge says of it: "I laughed heartily at the continuation in *BLACKWOOD*. . . . I do not doubt that it gave more pleasure, and to a greater number, than a continuation by myself in the spirit of the first two cantos."

There is a touching instance of the suddenness with which an author is sometimes snatched away from his work in Goldsmith's *RETALIATION*; that brilliant series of mock epitaphs which hit off their subjects with a wit Pope might have envied, and a good-nature to which Pope can lay little claim. What would one not give, as Macaulay says, for sketches from the same hand of Johnson and Gibbon as happy and vivid as the sketches of Burke and Garrick! What a cruel fate has left the portrait of Sir Joshua unfinished!

Here Reynolds is laid, and to tell you  
my mind,  
He has not left a wiser or better behind.  
His pencil was striking, resistless, and  
grand;  
His manners were gentle, complying,  
and bland:  
Still born to improve us in every part,  
His pencil our faces, his manners our  
heart.  
To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly  
steering:  
When they judged without skill he was  
still hard of hearing;  
When they talked of their Raphaels,  
Correggios and stuff  
He shifted his trumpet, and only took  
snuff.  
By flattery unspoiled——

and then in the middle of the line the writer laid down the pen he was never to use again. Poor dear Goldsmith! One of the most lovable figures in all our literature, dead in the prime of his life and the heyday of his reputation! "Let not his faults be remembered; he was a very great man."

How swift, too, was the blow that struck Dickens down on that summer's day five and twenty years ago. Rich, happy, universally honoured, rejoicing in his prosperity and in his power of giving pleasure to others, he worked faithfully to the last. Towards the close of his life his labours as a novelist had been somewhat inter-

rupted, and from 1861, when *GREAT EXPECTATIONS* was completed, until 1870 only one novel had come from his busy pen, and that not one of the best. But in that latter year (or, rather, in the close of 1869) after months of the most untiring exertions, travelling, lecturing, and reading, he turned again to his true vocation, and began *THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD*. There is no trace of fatigue in it, no sign of lessening vitality. He was working on the ground that he had made his own and he was happy in his work. On the morning of the 8th of June, 1870, he had been writing in the little *chalet* in the grounds of his house at Gad's Hill, writing cheerfully, hopefully. Contrary to his usual custom he had resumed work after lunch, and continued it through the greater part of the afternoon. Then he walked back to the house he was never again to leave alive. He had made an appointment with a friend in London for the following day, but it was never kept. By the evening of the 9th he was dead, leaving *THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD* a mystery still, though one, it may be, that does not need much unravelling.

Like his great predecessor Scott, Dickens died in harness, died as he lived and as he wished to die, honest, independent, and hard-working to the end. Scott, too, left a tale untold, *THE SIEGE OF MALTA*, written while he was on his last futile journey in search of health. Although a good part of this work was executed, it has never been published, and we must all re-echo Lockhart's hope that it never will be. Scott, at least, like Dickens, died in the presence of those he loved. Thackeray, the third of

the triad whose names are so mutually suggestive, bore his last struggle in solitude and passed away in the night, not without pain, an old gray-headed man of fifty-two. He had resigned the editorship of the *CORNHILL MAGAZINE* in 1862, though he continued to write regularly for it. In its columns, besides the delightful *ROUNDABOUT PAPERS* appeared *THE ADVENTURES OF PHILIP, LOVEL THE WIDOWER*, and that unfinished book which gives him a place in these pages. In the opinion of many *DENIS DUVAL* promised to rank with his best work, and he had certainly given more pains to it than he had always been willing, or able, to give in his later years. Unhappily but seven chapters had been completed when in the early hours of Christmas Eve, 1863, the great writer died. His death was almost as sudden as that of his friendly rival Dickens, who saw him only a week before the end and described him as being "cheerful and looking very bright."

Another and a more recent death has left the world of letters poorer, and drawn a word of pity from every part of the world. When Robert Louis Stevenson died at the end of 1894 there was left a vacant place that no one has shown himself quite capable of filling; and although it may be that only those who knew him well can fully appreciate his life and his worth, still there was general sympathy and sorrow when the news reached us of that sudden death, and of the lonely grave on the crest of a Samoan hill. He also has left books unfinished; works in the process of being moulded by his hand, and still waiting the final touches that they can never receive.



## THE FORTY DAYS.

It is winter in High Brittany, but winter clad in silver and pearl rather than cloaked in leaden purple flecked with snow, as it too often is at home across the water. For days, and sometimes for weeks, the weather keeps itself at stretch; there is no sun visible in all the shining dome of sky, no touch of gold in the even radiance that fills the air; sky and sea travel to meet each other in a tender haze of gray that, when one looks at it again, is not gray but a shadowy white that glistens and shines in a pale chill splendour. It is the clear colourlessness of water in light. The country is still, too; the woods very void of life, silent and desert; the trees purple in their masses, and variously blotched with orange and green of lichen, moss, and ivy. The fields are bare, in the hedgerows the autumn glow of red hip and haw is gone, and the birds have not begun to build. The touch of spring has not come yet to make the world quick; it is winter, but the farther edge of winter, in High Brittany.

And it is also Lent; that strange season which is now, and here, so full of contradictions, of memories, of the vestiges of dying custom, tradition, and faith, of gaiety and mourning, of habit and of indifference, that there is surely no other time of year that enfolds so much; no other time of year, perhaps, that has so much to tell, if one care to listen. Lent in Brittany is a quaint and ancient crone, wearing a mask that is half laughter, half tears, and below it the wrinkled face of the past.

Shrove Tuesday has gone by, with

its pancakes. In the old days, when fasting was more strictly practised than now, these were the last eggs eaten before the beginning of Lent, as the Easter eggs, gay with many colours, were the first eaten after it was ended. And though this is no longer the case, here, as with us across the water, only perhaps more universally, pancakes are made in every house down to the poorest; and as they are tossed in the pan the mother chants to a rambling fragment of Church music:

God sends pancakes  
To all good children;  
May the devil fly away with the bad ones!

While the children about her watch with a solemnity that is twofold, divided between an uneasy recollection of many small sins and a serious joy in pleasures to come, the thin yellow cakes leaping so merrily into the air. But Shrove Tuesday has never been a great day of Carnival, or Masking, here at St. Malo, as it is elsewhere; perhaps because the little town does not lightly give up workdays to frolic. The Masks take an airing on the Sunday before, Quinquagesima or *Dimanche-gras*, and come out again in crowds on the Sunday after, Pancake Sunday, as the Malouins call it; and indeed they are to be seen more or less on all the earlier Sundays of Lent up to Passion. But on Shrove Tuesday only a handful of children here and there deck themselves in such gauds as they can come by, with faces blackened with soot or masks cut out of paper, and much contentment, noise, and dirt. In Saint-Malo

the shops have hung out pyramids of masks, beards, noses, and grotesque heads; the secondhand booths in the ancient Rue de Boyer,—where everything is sold, from sea-chests and sea-boots to wayside crosses and weather-worn wooden saints—are gaudy with hanging costumes and dominos of every shape and colour. On the quays outside the wall the roundabouts have taken up their places, and a dozen small stalls edge the side-walk; and by these signs one may know that Lent, the time of mourning, is about to begin. And upon Ash Wednesday, if one look close enough, one may see the ashes clinging to the hair of those who return, with the air of having more pressing business elsewhere, from early mass; the ashes, which are all that remain of last year's palms, that have been burnt upon the altar now that the year has come round again to Lent, and sprinkled by the priest upon the heads of the faithful.

But if one go to look for them, there are other signs also that Lent has come once more. In the meat-market, built on the ground where once the White Brotherhood of Saint John had its great soup-kitchen, called literally the Kettle of the Poor, in the meat-market where last week was a thronging crowd and stalls hung round with joints, or piled high with poultry, is now emptiness; there is only a knot of women at the far end about the butter-counter, who speak in spite of themselves with lowered voices. The crowd has moved on across the town, through the twilight of morning in the narrow streets and sudden splashes of inlet sunshine, to the fish-market; and there is noise enough and to spare, a continuous Babel of sound in which, surely, there is every possible note of the human voice, a rushing, rising whirl of speech and laughter that is as ceaseless and as indefinable as the sea. All Saint-

Malo is here, or has been, or will be here to-day; all Saint-Malo is bargaining, buying, gossiping and quarrelling at the pitch of all its voices, in a dense, struggling, importunate mass. It is Lent, and one must eat *maigre*; and fish, it too frequently happens, is neither plentiful nor cheap, and is not to be bought without a world of argument over the last *sou*. For on the one side there is Paris with her gaping mouth to be filled, and on the other the sea, churned by the north-westerly winds of winter round the uncountable rocks, and treacherous with sudden storm and fog.

It is worth while on a market-day in Lent to spend an hour in the Place de la Poissonnerie. Here is more to be seen of the life of Saint-Malo and the Clos-Poulet than anywhere else. Here are the people of the town, the ladies above and the ladies below, as an old song calls them, alluding to those who live in the upper flats and who, if not too high up, represent the richer *bourgeoisie*; and those who live below, on the ground floor, that is in the shops. Here are the servants from Dinard and from Paramé, in white caps and aprons, with their big baskets; here are peasants from all the country-side, in the strange varying caps of their districts, and their winter cloaks, strange also, back-aprons as they call them, hanging wide and short and loose from a straight band tied about their shoulders. Here are men in blouses of every shade, from purple to white, or of black, or pink, curiously embroidered in colours; they wear high boots, and some, if it be cold enough, have short, shapeless coats of goatskin, brown or black or a grizzled yellow. Here are fish-sellers from Saint-Jacut, large-faced, simple, very broad in speech and quaint in habit; they make the sign of the Cross over their fish as they sell them, for is it

not Lent? And there are others from Cancale; tall, handsome, bold-eyed women, full-coloured and loose-lipped, with their coquettish caps poised on their shining black hair which is combed curiously into ridge and furrow over their brows; hot-tempered and muscular, as ready to fight as to flatter, and with an odd wheedling grace of glance and accent that changes on the least provocation to ferocity. They are sometimes, in their way, very splendid creatures; but on looking at them one understands the old Malouin saying, "When you bargain with a Cancalaise, have a good lock on your door."

Round about the central fish-market, on the narrow pavement, there are baskets in an endless row, baskets of cockles, mussels, and whelks; of periwinkles, the old Lenten food of Saint-Malo, so popular that the spring-fair was called after them, and they have a fairy-tale all their own which Malouin mothers still tell their children; of sardines, fresh and salt, of *lançons*, a kind of sand-eel, and of crabs, which are not quite such as one usually sees in England, but of two sorts, the one spiny and the other growing a crop of black hair. And if in Lent one buys crabs one must make a difference between these two; the spiny ones must have the sign of the Cross made over them, but the hairy ones must be spat upon. And if you would know why this is so, and why there are no sardines on the Emerald coast, and why the sand-eels are called little lances, there are plenty of old peasant-women able and ready to explain, and to tell many other stories, too,—true stories all of them, "as true as it is Lent," as they will wind up. And the bells of the single steeple overhead ring out incessantly for one service after another; and the *curé's* housekeeper hurries off

homewards with the best fish in her basket, for who should have the best, if not the *curé*? And as the creels grow empty the fish-sellers once more make the sign of the Cross over them, and say to each other contentedly that it is a "good Lent."

But if, according to the Church, this is a time of fasting, it is also, and has been for more years than one can count, a season of gaiety, when the masks come out and the streets and quays of the grey town are motley with a fantastic crowd. Unlike most other places, where Carnival is riotous from Quinquagesima to Shrove Tuesday and re-appears for a single day at Mid-Lent, here at Saint-Malo Pancake Sunday, or the First Sunday in Lent, has always been the chiefest day for merriment and masking. The roundabouts are thronged with gaudy dominoes: the lottery-booths are surrounded with men and women in false heads and extraordinary disguise; and through the ancient gates of the town there is a continual coming and going of priest and punchinello, citizen and peasant, a long, changing, many-coloured stream that has yet been for centuries the same. But it is rather within the walls, in the narrow winding streets, that one looks most kindly upon the Carnival; as when, on one of these silver days of winter, a pale sunlight gilds the later afternoon and glances along the ancient Rue du Boyer. In the wide black archways the old-clothes' shops hang out fantastic garments for hire, yellow, red, or blue: across the narrow way, outside an arched and grated window, is a pile of masks and heads, hideous, grotesque, impossibly ruddy or lividly white, a heap of crude staring colour; in the street, which is barely wide enough to be called a street, is a gay crowd laughing, struggling, screaming, singing, clowns and jesters in gaudy red and green, tall black semina-

rists, soldiers, sailors, peasants in blouses, white caps from all the country-side; and ever as a background the tottering houses on either side, which have looked down on such a sight year after year for three centuries. Scraps of the *Marseillaise* or of the latest ditty from Paris hum through the air. The bells ring for vespers; and the blue Sisters, with their huge white flapping *coiffes*, convoy long files of the quaintly-gowned town-orphans on their way to church.

The earlier Sundays of Lent had formerly their special customs and ceremonies, which have only of recent years fallen into disuse. Shooting the goose and shooting at the *papageai* were always Lenten sports, while running at the Quintain took place variously at Mid-Lent or on Easter Monday. On Pancake Sunday, till some twenty years ago, all Saint-Malo went out to the great beach to shoot the goose. In old times the bird was tethered alive by its head to a pole or peg fixed in the sand, and became the property of the man skilful enough to free it by severing its neck, which seldom happened till it had been quieted by successive wounds. If the winner was a poor man, he received along with the goose a few silver *sols*, which were called a Lenten gift; if rich, he was expected to give the town a sum to be divided among the sick or the needy. In more recent times, and till the sport fell into abeyance, the goose was a dead one, hung by its neck from a tall pole, and the Lenten gift had become a pitcher of cider, which the winner in return was expected to offer also to the other competitors. The game is very ancient, even more ancient than its fellow, the *papageai*, which was introduced to Saint-Malo by the good Duchess Anne herself, but which, for all her patronage, never became so dear to the people as their own goose-shooting. And yet the

*papageai* was a popular sport, and perhaps a more courtly one; and early in the fifteenth century it was no empty honour, during the first fortnight of Lent, to be King of the *Papageai* and decorated as such by the Duchess herself. The *papageai* was generally a pigeon roughly carved in wood and set up on the highest tower of the castle; and he who shot it away needed considerable skill, whether he used bow or arrow, as in the early days, or later a clumsy gun resting upon a high stand. Not only was the King decorated by the Duchess with a silver chain from which hung medals of all the former Kings of the *Papageai*, but he received also from the town an allowance during his year of royalty, which varied at different times from £60 to £100, a very considerable sum in those days; so that, one may repeat again, it was no empty honour some four hundred years ago to become King of the *Papageai* on Pancake Sunday. As to the quintain, it too is an ancient Lenten or Easter sport at Saint-Malo, where for centuries it was represented by a mannikin dressed as an English soldier; and indeed, though in a less picturesque form, it is popular still, but it is removed to the national holiday in July, and has no longer a share in the Easter merry-makings.<sup>1</sup>

Another ancient game proper to the Third Sunday in Lent was the *soule*, which is said to date back to a period beyond the Christian era. However that may be, the *soule* was

<sup>1</sup> The custom of shooting at the *papageai* was not peculiar to Saint-Malo. Perhaps it was one of the many importations which the French alliance brought into Scotland. Our readers will remember with what ceremony Lady Margaret Bellenden went to attend the Festival of the Popinjay in the county of Lanark on a May morning in the year 1679, and of the shock her pride received at the discomfiture of Goose Gibbie. Sir Walter says that the custom prevailed in Ayrshire down to his own time.

played everywhere, though less at Saint-Malo than in the country around, at this season of the year; and there seems reason to believe that the game had a certain religious character. The youngest bridegroom of the parish offered a garlanded *soule* (an inflated leather ball) to the church on the Third Sunday of Lent; and after it had lain during High Mass upon the altar, and had been specially blessed, it was given back to the parish for the traditional game. One remembers in this connection the Shrove-tide football so common in England; and the *soule* seems undoubtedly to have been closely akin to it. Its special peculiarity was that the game was originally played only, as it seems, on religious fasts and festivals, on the Third Sunday in Lent, on Saint John's Day, sometimes on the Fête-Dieu (Corpus Christi), when it always received a preliminary benediction at the altar; while its sole temporal use appears to have been as a traditional gift at Easter to the feudal lord of the district.

And Lent, the mourning season of the Church, is not only in High Brittany a time of gaiety, but also a time of much business. It is the season of fairs, and if fairs are a fine occasion for merry-making they always begin in a seriously commercial way. It is only after one has sold one's cows, shorn one's sheep, got rid of the cartful of little pink pigs or the sacks of corn or bundles of long slim fruit-trees,—only after an infinity of bargaining, wrangling and drinking (for no sale holds good till one has drunk upon it)—that one is ready to amuse oneself; which is so true that, though a fair may begin at six in the morning, it is only towards noon, when business slackens, that the shows and roundabouts open in a leisurely way. From the first week in Lent the fairs begin in a long succession;

without going far afield, one could find one for each of the Forty Days, even, as at Croisty, for Good Friday; and the famous fair of Dinan, called the Liège, runs through nearly the whole of Lent up to Palm Sunday.

At Saint-Malo itself the Saint-Ouine, as it is named, is held on the Sunday before Passion, though there is not much now remaining of the great spring assembly which has a history of its own during the centuries that it has existed. It has travelled in its time, the Saint-Ouine. It was once held within the walls, when it was called the Periwinkle Fair from the bowlfuls of periwinkles that were sold at it, or sometimes the Whistle Fair, because, it seems, of the innumerable whistles and trumpets and horns which children bought there four hundred years ago as they still buy them to-day; but it was turned out after the great fire in the sixteenth century, which burned half Saint-Malo to the ground. Then it betook itself to the island of the Grand Bey, where was then a chapel dedicated to Saint Ouen, or, as he was called by the people, Saint Ouine, about which the fair was held, and where the wives of Saint-Malo sailors prayed for fair winds to bring their men home, turning the chapel cross towards the quarter whence the wind should come, so that the saying arose, "As changeable as the cross of Saint-Ouine." Lastly, and not till the middle of this century, long after the last ruins of the chapel on the Grand Bey had been swept away or overgrown, the Saint-Ouine was transferred again to the broad quays outside the town, where it is now held every year on the Sunday before Passion. But its importance has gone from it, and even compared with its neighbours it is a poor thing indeed; from its ancestor, the great Whistle Fair, it has



only inherited one quality, and that is noise.

They are all the same, these fairs or assemblies, in their degree: roundabouts, lotteries, innumerable varieties of gaming-tables, shooting-booths, and phonographs; small shows of inconceivable squalor where women, thin, unwashed, and half-starved, shiver in a hideous undress; tumblers, cheap-jacks; huge quaint baskets of the very ancient cakes of High Brittany, the *cracquelins*, and the *fouaces*, buckwheat cakes made not too cleanly on girdles over charcoal stoves, pans of steaming sausages: one does not fast nowadays with conviction. And in the midst of the noise, the crowding, the shooting, the gambling, the din of drums and cymbals and the braying of mechanical organs, there may be at the larger fairs such a show as the Passion, which is, according to its advertisement, "warmly recommended by the Cardinal-Archbishop"; and where the Passion of Christ is given in living pictures, and the audience, with a sprinkling of priests in it, looks on with a quiet and pleased attention, as far distant from indifference as from devotion. They do not applaud, neither do they criticise: they observe it with the same placid approval that they give to the *crèche* in their own church at Christmas; and one comes away presently with a memory of Roman soldiers, of Pontius Pilate on his high seat, of a pale slender Mary in blue and white, and of a central Figure; wondering that a thing that cannot be well done is done so little ill.

But already the gay days of Lent are over and it is the eve of Passion. To-night before Vespers in every church the crucifixes and the figures of Saints will be covered with long purple draperies. And, if one asks of the people why this is so, one is told with intense conviction that the Saints are all dead between

Passion and Easter, because *le bon Dieu* Himself died then. There is a certain impressiveness about the hanging veils of purple beneath which the statues are dimly outlined in a strangely human fashion; a certain solemnity in the absence of glitter and colour, save that of mourning, in these churches that are usually so full of rich and vivid brightness. There is a dramatic touch about it that calls to mind the old and close connection between religion and drama in the days when, for instance, a company of authors and actors took to themselves the name of the Brotherhood of the Passion and received from Charles the Sixth of France the exclusive right of playing sacred pieces in theatres or churches about the country. And long after this right had been rescinded the plays, in perhaps a simpler form, lingered among the people, lingered almost till to-day, if indeed in the by-ways of High or Low Brittany they do not still exist. At the village near Nantes called the Bourg de Batz the Passion was played regularly, under the name of the Tragedy, till some eighteen or twenty years ago; it was given in a disused chapel, and the priests of the parish, with the mace-bearer, the singing-men and the servers, attended in cassock and surplice. At many other places similar plays were popular during the first half of this century; and at a chapel near Saint-Servan, barely four miles from Saint-Malo, they are said to have been very finely presented no more than thirty years ago. But probably, if the Passion plays still exist anywhere, it will be in the form of corrupt and almost incoherent dialogues chanted by children who scarcely know what they are saying; as, in their season, the Christmas dramas have sunk into an unintelligible formula. But in Brittany another custom existed alongside with

the Miracle-play, and it has proved more long-lived. It was usual till very recently, even in Saint-Malo, to sing songs of the Passion from door to door as in England carols are sung at Christmas; and if the Pastoral or the Complaint, as it was called, has died out in the town, it is still alive, though dying fast, in the country. Here is one of these Complaints that was sung till a few years ago in the district; it is incomplete, but none of these songs are now more than fragments. This one, it is believed, has never been published, and it is rare to find one so coherent and so long; but a translation unfortunately gives little of its quaint uncouth charm, or of the pathos of the refrain.

We have come into your courts  
Praises for to sing:

*The Passion of sweet Jesus,  
Dear God, but it was great!*

Jesus Christ did penitence,  
Penitence for our sin.  
*The Passion, etc.*

Forty days and forty nights  
He took no meat;  
*The Passion, etc.*

And at the end of the forty  
So little would he eat;  
*The Passion, etc.*

A little bread, a little wine,  
An orange,—no more.  
*The Passion, etc.*

Jesus Christ did not eat all,  
He gave some to his Angels four;  
*The Passion, etc.*

To Saint Peter and Saint Paul,  
And Saint Michael with his sword.  
*The Passion, etc.*

You will see on the Cross of Sorrow  
The suffering of our Lord.  
*The Passion, etc.*

You will see His dear arms  
On the Cross spread wide;  
*The Passion, etc.*

You will see His dear feet  
Nailed side by side;  
*The Passion, etc.*

You will see His dear head  
Crowned with white thorn;  
*The Passion, etc.*

You will see His bleeding side  
By the cruel lance torn.  
*The Passion, etc.*

You will see the little birds  
Dying upon the tree;  
*The Passion, etc.*

Higher than the mountains  
Will rise the angry sea . . . .  
*The Passion of sweet Jesus,  
Dear God, but it was great!*

When Palm Sunday comes High Brittany is at its devoutest. One takes to church a sprig of box or of laurel (the conventional palm) to have it blessed; and it is carried home again to be put in its place in front of the plaster Virgin, that is certainly above the fireplace or somewhere against the wall, till next Ash Wednesday comes round; when, as has been said before, it is burned upon the altar by the priest who presently "gives the ashes." Formerly sprigs of palm were stuck in the earth of garden or field to ensure fertility; but this, with much else that is quaint and graceful, has long died out. There is little now that is curious or particular in Holy Week. In the days when Saint-Malo was a cathedral town, and its Chapter as rich as it was haughty, it was the custom for the senior Canon to go in state to the Croix du Fief, or Bishop's Cross, where all Church proclamations were made, when the midday *angelus* was sounding on Holy Wednesday. As soon as the bells had ceased, the Canon, surrounded by his chaplain, his acolyte, and his four mace-bearers, read out the order of the Bishop and Chapter, that "all unclean Jews and other pagans should quit the town, under pain of the goad and whip, before the first sound of the evening *angelus*," with forbiddance of return before Easter Wednesday at midday, so that

during the holy time of Easter the town should not be "made vile and foul" by their presence within it. It may be added that it was not till so recently as 1708 that Saint-Malo, in taking in a new piece of ground, permitted the Jews to build themselves a quarter from which henceforward they were not turned out even during Holy Week. On this same day also, Holy Wednesday, at the office of the *Ténèbres*, a curious custom existed till the Revolution swept it away with so much else that was better worth preserving. At that passage in the Scriptures, read at this service, where mention is made of a great noise, not only did the priests overturn their stools, but the congregation (who had gone prepared) made a hideous din by rattling iron pots, metal bars, or anything else of the sort; which was, as a historian of the town quaintly observes, "a means whereby the faithful were encouraged to take part in the service."

On Good Friday (when, by the way, a special service is said and not a Mass, because, as the people explain, the *bon Dieu* is dead) it was till quite recently the invariable rule that women should go to church with the wings of their caps unstarched and hanging loose on their shoulders, in sign of mourning, as is still done in the country, and as widows wear them during the earliest days of their widowhood. And on this same day there is still no man so profane and impious as to stir or disturb the ground with any sort of tool: there are even many who will not do such work throughout Holy Week; and on this "grievous day" it is quite

certain that if touched the earth would open, groaning, in a bottomless gulf, and that all sorts of misfortune would follow. On Good Friday also, as all good Malouin children believe and know, the church-bells have flown to Rome, to be blessed by the Pope himself; and when they begin to ring again on Easter Eve one says with joy, "Ah, they have come safe home again!" One says it with joy, for when they come back from Rome their great metal skirts are full of beautiful eggs, red and green and yellow, that taste like no other eggs in the world; the eggs that in older times were carried to church on Easter Day to be blessed at High Mass by the priest.

And already in the corners of the country they are singing from door to door, as once they did here in Saint-Malo, the Easter Pastoral, the *Allelujah*, the Song of the Eggs:

I've a little bird in my breast,  
Not long has left the nest:  
So sweetly sings,  
So sweetly rings,  
*Allelujah!*

It is not very intelligible, but it serves its purpose; from house to house the sound of *Allelujah* is carried gaily, and from house to house the eggs are gathered in payment, till one's basket is full; for at Easter all the world is generous in High Brittany.

But Lent is over, the Forty Days are done; and with them winter has gone, and spring sits in the woods and the fields in all her bravery of primrose and green. The great festival of religion is the festival of spring, and winter is over. *Allelujah!*

THE WINGS OF A DOVE.<sup>1</sup>

## I.

A TALL lanky boy of about seventeen sate half-way down the great flight of steps at the eastern entrance of the Jumma Mosque at Delhi, looking anxiously at a cage full of *avitorats*, twinkling little brown birds with a suspicion of red amid their brown; flitting, slender, silent little birds, never still for a second. He looked at them half satisfied, half doubtful, and as he looked he turned a four-*anna* bit over and over in his brown fingers. For though he was dressed as a European his complexion was as dark as that of most high-caste natives, and darker by a good bit than that of a girl some one or two years his junior, who sate fondling a pigeon on a higher step, and looking askance, also, at the *avitorats*.

"The Huzoor can have them for five *annas* if he chooses," said the evil-looking bird-catcher who was squatting among his wares. Though he used the honorific title, his manner was absolutely devoid of courtesy, and he turned without the least change in it to address a friend in the parrot-line, who sate with his cages on the step above. For this particular flight of steps is set apart to the selling of birds, especially after prayer-time on Fridays, when the pigeon-racers and quail-fighters buy and bet in the wide portico of rosy stone and pale marble. The *avitorats*, they having no value to the sportsmen, commanded but a slack sale, so the boy had plenty of time in which to make up his mind; to judge by appearances a difficult task, for his face was undeniably

weak, though handsome, kindly, and soft. He wore a white drill suit, clean but sadly frayed; and his gray wideawake was many sizes too large for his small head. Perhaps it was the knowledge of this, combined with a vague suspicion that the hat knew quite as much about bird-fancying as the head within it, which made him, in his perplexity, take it off, place it on his slack knees and drop the four-*anna* piece into it, as if it had better decide the question. Sitting so, with bare head, he looked handsomer than ever, for its shape was that of a young Adonis. It was, in fact, the only thing about him, or his life, which corresponded with his name, Agamemnon Menelaus. The surname, Gibbs, used, after those eight resounding syllables, to come as a shock to the various chaplains who at various times had undertaken to look after young Gibbs's spiritual welfare. Some of them, the more experienced ones, acquiesced in that and many another anomaly after their first glance at his soft gentle face; for it was typical of that class of Eurasian which makes the soul of a chaplain sink within him. Others reached the same conclusion after a reference to the mother, Mrs. Gibbs. She was a very dark, pious woman, tearfully uncertain of all things save that she, being a widow, must be supported by charity, by the offertory for preference. She, however, made the problem of his name less intrusive by calling him Aggie as if he had been a girl.

"They are young birds, as the Huzoor could see for himself if he had eyes," went on the bird-catcher

<sup>1</sup> Copyright in the United States.

with a yawn. "Next moulting they will be as red as a *rutti* seed. But it is five *annas*, not four."

Aggie had no lack of eyes outwardly; they were large and soft as velvet, and as they looked down at the *avitovats* showed a thick fringe of curling lashes. But there was an almost pathetic guilelessness in them, and one brown hand hesitated about his breast-pocket. He had another *anna* there, part of a monthly stipend of one rupee for attending the choir, which he had intended to spend on sweets, preserved pumpkins for choice; but the *avitovats*, with their promise of scarlet plumage, cozened his indolent, colour-loving eyes almost as much as the thought of the sweets did his palate. Should he, should he not? The mere sight of the birds was a strong point in their favour, and his hand had sought the inside of his pocket when a whisper met his ear. "Hens!" It was unmistakable, and he turned to look at the girl behind him. She was sitting on her heels, crunched up chin and knees, holding her pigeon close to her face as if to hide it. And as he turned she sidled further away along the step with the curious gliding shuffle peculiar to native girls and pigeons. "*Ka-boo-tri, ka-boo-tri, ka-boo-tri,*" gurgled the pigeon, as if pleased at the motion. It was a blue-rock, showing a purple and green iridescence on the breast, and the girl's dress matched its colourings exactly; for her ragged cotton skirt had washed and worn to a dark neutral tint, and the shot-silk bodice, tattered and torn, with tarnished gold embroidery on its front, took gleams of a past glory from the sunlight. Her veil had faded in its folds to a sort of cinnamon brown, touched with blue, and both it and the bodice were many sizes too large for her slight childish figure.

"If the Huzoor is not to buy let

him give place to those who will," suggested the bird-catcher cavalierly. He had been too far to catch the whisper, and thought to clinch the bargain by a threat.

Agamemnon Menelaus looked at him nervously. "Are you sure they are young birds?" he suggested timidly. "They might,—they might be hens, you know." There was a half perceptible quiver of his handsome head as if to watch the girl. The bird-catcher broke out into violent asseverations, and Aggie's hand, out of sheer trepidation, went into his pocket again.

"Hens!" This time there was a ring almost of command in the tone, and Agamemnon obeyed it instinctively by rising to go. "*Ka-boo-tri, ka-boo-tri,*" came the gurgle of the pigeon, or was it partly a chuckle from the girl as she sidled still further along the step?

"So! that is good riddance," said the bird-catcher to the parrot-seller, angrily. "God made the rainbow, but the devil made the dye-pot! Yet I thought I had sold them at last. He looked not so sharp as that."

The parrot-seller yawned. "'Twas Kabootri did it," he remarked with bland indifference. "She said 'hens.'"

The bird-catcher stared at him incredulously, then passed the look on to the girl who still sate with the crooning pigeon held close to her face.

"Kabootri!" he echoed with an uneasy laugh. "Nay, neighbour, 'twas she who told me but an hour ago that if I sold not something this Friday she would kill herself. 'Tis a trick of words she hath learned of her trade," he went on with a curious mixture of anger and approbation. "But it means something to a man who hath cursed luck and a daughter who has a rare knack of getting her own way."

The parrot-seller gave a pull at a *bulbul*-seller's pipe as if it were his



own. "Thou wilt be disgraced if thou give it her much longer, friend," he said calmly. "'Tis time she were limed and netted. And with no mother either to whack her!"

The uneasy laugh came again. "If the Nawab's pigeon wins we may see to a son-in-law; but she is a child still, neighbour, and a good daughter too, helping her father more than he helps her." There was a touch of real pride in his tone.

"She said 'hens'" retorted the parrot-seller. "Ask her if she did not."

"Kabootri! Kabootri!"

The call was a trifle tremulous, but the girl rose with alacrity, throwing the pigeon into the air with the deft hand of a practised racer as she did so. The bird was practised also, and without a flutter flew off into the blue like an arrow from a bow; then, as if confused by finding itself without a rival, wheeled circling round the rose-red pile till it settled on one of the marble cupolas.

"What is't, father?" she asked, standing on the upper steps and looking down on the two men. She was wonderfully fair with a little pointed chin, and a wide firm mouth curiously at variance with it, as were the big, broad, black eyebrows with the liquid softness of her eyes.

"Why didst say 'hens,' Kabootri?" replied her father, assuming the fact as the best way of discovering the truth, since her anger at unjust suspicion was always prompt.

"Why?" she echoed absently. "Why?" Then suddenly she smiled. "I don't know, father; but I did!"

The bird-catcher broke out into useless oaths. His daughter had the dove's name, but was no better than a peacock, a peacock in a thief's house; she had lost him five *annas* for nothing.

Kabootri's eyebrows looked ominous.

"Five *annas*! Fret not for five *annas*!" she echoed scornfully, turning on her heels towards the gateway; and flinging out her arms she began the pigeon's note, the pigeon's name and her own—"Ka-boo-tri, ka-boo-tri, ka-boo-tri!" It was as if a bird were calling to its mate, and the answer came quickly in the soft whirr of many wings as the blue-rocks, which live among the rose-red battlements and marble cupolas, wheeled down in lessening circles.

"Lo! there is Kabootri calling the pigeons," remarked an old gentleman, who was crossing citywards from the Fort; a stoutish gentleman, clothed immaculately in filmy white muslin with a pale pink inner turban folded across his forehead and showing triangularly beneath the white outer one. He was one of the richest bankers in Delhi; by religion a Jain, the sect to whom the destruction of life is the one unpardonable sin, and he gave a nervous glance at the distant figure on the steps.

"Nay, partner, she was in our street last week," put in his companion, who was dressed in similar fashion; "and Kabootri is not as the boys, who are ever at one with sparrows for a *pice* or two. She hath business in her, and a right feeling. She takes once and hath done with it, till the value is paid. The gift of the old bodice and shawl my house gave her kept us free for six months. Still, if thou art afraid, we can go round a bit."

Kabootri from her coign of vantage saw them sneaking off the main road, and smiled at their caution contemptuously; but what they had said was true; she had business in her, and right feeling. It was not their turn to pay; so, cuddling a captured pigeon to her breast, she set off in an opposite direction, threading the bazaars and alleys unerringly, and

every now and again crooning her own name softly to the bird which, without a struggle, watched her with its onyx eyes, and called to her again.

"There is Kabootri with a pigeon," remarked the drug-seller at the corner to his clients, the leisurely folk with ailments who sit and suggest sherbets to each other, and go away finally to consult a soothsayer for a suitable day on which to take their little screw or phial of medicine. "She will be going to Sri Parasnâth's. It is a while since she was there, and Kabootri is just, for a bird-slayer."

Apparently he was right as to her purpose; for at the turn leading to Sri Parasnâth's place of business, she sate down on a step, and after a preliminary caress fastened a string deftly to one of the pigeon's feet. Then she caressed it a bit, stroking its head and crooning to it. Finally with a bound she started to her feet, flung it from her to flutter forlornly in the air, her level black eyebrows bent themselves downwards into a portentous frown, and her young voice rang out shrilly, almost savagely: "*Yahee, choori-yâh-mâr! Aihee, choori-yâh-mâr!* (Hillo, the bird-slayer! Hullo the bird-slayer!)"

"Look out, brother," said a fat old merchant in spectacles, who was poring over a ledger in the wooden balcony of an old house. "Look out and see who 'tis. If 'tis Kabootri, thou canst take eight *annas* from the box. She will not loose for less; but if 'tis a boy with sparrows, wait and bargain."

It was Kabootri, no doubt. Who else but she came like a young tiger-cat down the lane, startling the shadowy silence with strange savage threats? Who but she came like a young Bacchante, dancing with fury, showing her small white teeth, and apparently dragging her poor victim by one leg, or whirling it cruelly

round her on a string, so that its fluttering wings seemed like her fluttering veil? "Give! *Ai*, followers of Rishâba, give, or I kill! *Ai*, Jain people, give, or I take life!"

Sri Parasnâth put his turbanless bald head with its odd little tuft of a pigtail over the balcony, and, concealing his certainty under a very creditable show of dismay, called down curses solemnly on her head. He would send for the police; he would have her locked up and fined. She might take the bird and kill it before his very eyes if she chose, but he would not pay a *pice* for its freedom. To all of which Kabootri replied with a fresh method of doing the victim to death. She played her part with infinite spirit; but her antagonist was in a hurry to get some orders for Manchester goods off in time for the English mail; so his performance was but half-hearted, and ere she had well begun her list of horrors, the eight-*anna* bit came clinking down on the brick pavement, and she, as in duty bound, had to squat beside it and loosen the string from the pigeon's leg. As usual she had to drive it from settling on her head or shoulders by wild antics, until it fluttered to a neighbouring roof, where it sidled along the copings with bright eyes watching her, and soft cooings of "*Ka-boo-tri, Ka-boo-tri!*"

Once beyond Jain eyes, she always gave back the call so as to assure herself that no harm had been done. This time by some mischance there happened to be a broken feather in the wing, and her lips set themselves over the task of pulling it out; that being a necessity to even flight. After which, came renewed caresses with a passion in them beyond the occasion; for indeed the passion in Kabootri was altogether beyond the necessities of her life, as yet. True, it was not always such plain sailing

as it had been with Sri Parasnâth. New comers there were, even old customers striving in modern fashion to shake themselves free from such deliberate blackmailing, who needed to be reminded of her methods; methods ending in passionate tears over her own cruelty in the first quiet spot she could reach. But of late years she had grown cunning in the avoidance of irretrievable injury. A dexterous slipping of the cord would leave her captive free, and she herself at liberty to go round to some poultry-seller and borrow a poor fowl under sentence of death, with which she would return to unflinching execution. These things had to be, and her young face would be like a Medea's as she did the deed. But even this was of the past, since folk had begun to recognise the uselessness of driving the girl to extremities. Thus her threat, "I will kill, I will kill!" brought at most but a broken feather in a dove's wing, and a passionate cuddling of the victim to her breast.

This one was interrupted brusquely by a question: "Why did you say hens?" It was Aggie. He happened to live close by in a tumble-down tenement with two square yards of verandah, which were the mainstay of Mrs. Gibbs's position. They, and the necessity for blacking Agamemnon Menelaus's boots when he went to the choir, separated her effectually and irrevocably from her native neighbours. He did not sing now,—his voice had begun to crack—but he looked well in a surplice, and the chaplain knew he would have to pay the monthly stipend in any case. So, this being Friday, Aggie was on his way to evensong, polished boots and all; they were really the strongest barrier between him and the tall girl with her pretty bare feet who stood up to face him, with a soft, perplexed look in the eyes which were so like

his in all but expression, and even that merged into his in its softness and perplexity.

"Because,—because they *were* hens," she said with an odd little tremble in her voice.

So the two young things stood looking at each other, while the pigeon gurgled and cooed: "*Ka-boo-tri, ka-boo-tri, ka-boo-tri.*"

## II.

"So, see'st thou, Kabootri, thou wilt turn Christian and then I will marry thee." Aggie's outlook on the future went so far and left the rest to Providence; the girl's went further.

"Trra!" she commented. "That is fool's talk. I am a bird-slayer; how could we live without the pigeons and the mosque? Thou hast no money."

They were sitting on the flight of steps once more, with a cage full of scarlet *avitovats* between them, so that the passers-by could not see the hands that were locked in each other behind the cage.

"Then I will marry thee, and become a heathen," amended Agamemnon, giving a squeeze to what he held. She smiled, and the soft curves of her chin seemed to melt into those of her long throat, as she hung her head and looked at him as if he were the most beautiful thing in her world. "That is wiser," she said; "and if thou dost not marry me I will kill myself. So that is settled. He gave another squeeze to her hand, and she smiled again. Then they sate gazing at each other across the *avitovats*, hand in hand like a couple of children; for there was guilelessness in his eyes and innocence in hers.

"Lo!" she said suddenly, "I know not now why I said 'hens.'" She paused, failing to find her own meaning, and so came back to more

practical matters. "Thou hadst best be buying the birds, Aga-meean,<sup>1</sup> [for so, to suit her estimate of him, she had chosen to amend his name] "or folk will wonder. And if thou wilt leave them in the old place in the Queen's Gardens I will fetch them away, and thou canst buy them of me again next Friday."

There was no cunning in her manner, only a solid grasp on the exigencies of the position. Had he not a mother living in a house with a verandah; and was not her father a bird-seller, who was at that moment betting on the Nawab's coming pigeon-race on the platform above them? Despite these exigencies, however, the past three weeks had been pleasant; if Aggie was still rather hazy as to the difference between young cocks and old hens, it was from no lack of experience in the buying of *avitovats*. Kabootri used to give him the money wherewith to buy them, and leave it again in the hiding-place where she found the birds; so it was not an expensive amusement to either of them. And if Agamemnon Menelaus had not grasped the determination which underlay the girl's threats of taking life, it was from no lack of hearing them, aye, and of shivering at them. The savage, reckless young figure, startling the sunshine and shadow of the narrow lanes with its shrill cry, "I will kill, I will kill, yea, I will take life!" had filled him with a sort of proud bewilderment, a scared admiration. And other things had brought the same dizzy content with them. That same figure, sidling along the rose-red copings like any pigeon, to gain the marble cupolas where the young birds were to be found,—those young birds which must be taught betimes to play her game of Life and Death, as all her world must be

taught to play it—was fascinating. It was disturbing when it sate close to him in the Queen's Gardens, eating rose comfits bought out of the blood-money, and cooing to him like any dove, while the pigeons in the trees above it called *Ka-boo-tri, ka-boo-tri*, as if they were jealous.

The outcome of it all, however, was, as yet, no more than the discarding of boots in favour of native shoes, and the supplanting of the gray wideawake by a white and gold saucer-cap which only cost four *annas*, and lay on the dark waves of the lad's small head as if it had been made for it. Kabootri clasped her hands tight in sheer admiration as she watched him go down the steps with the cage of scarlet *avitovats*; but Mrs. Gibbs, while admitting the superlative beauty of the combination, burst into floods of lamentation at the sight, for it was a symptom she had seen often in lads of Aggie's age. His elder brother had begun that way; that elder brother who was now a thorn in the side of every chaplain from Peshawar to Calcutta by reason of his disconcerting desire to live as a heathen and be saved as a Christian.

So, when Aggie, with a spark of unusual spirit, had refused to put on the boots which she had made the servant black with the greatest care, for, of course, there had to be a servant in a house with a verandah; in other words, when he had refused to go to church, since native shoes and a Delhi cap are manifestly incompatible with a surplice, she went over to a bosom friend and wept again. But Mrs. Rosario was of a different type altogether. She seldom wept, taking life with a pure philosophy, and making her living out of her handsome daughters by marrying them off to the first comer on the chance of his doing well.

"There is no need to cry," she said

<sup>1</sup> *Aga*, noble; *Meean*, prince.

comfortably. "Your boy is no worse than all boys. If they do not get on a place or get married they fall into mischief. God made them so, and we must bow to His will, as we are Christians and not heathen. And girls are like that too. If they do not get married they will give trouble. So, if you ask my advice, I say that if you cannot get your poor boy on a place you had better get him a wife, or the bad black women in the bazaar will lead him to bad ways; for he is a handsome boy, almost as handsome as my Lily. He is too young, perhaps, and she is too young too, but if you like he can beau my Lily. You can ask some one for clothes, and then he can beau Lily to the choir. And give a little hop in your place, Mrs. Gibbs. When my girls try me I give hops. It makes them all right, and your boy will be all right too. You live too quiet, Mrs. Gibbs, for young folk; they will have some pleasure. So get your son nice new clothes, and I will give a hop at my place, and send my cook to help yours."

This solid sense caused Mrs. Gibbs to lie in wait for the chaplain in his verandah, armed with a coarse cotton handkerchief soaked in patchouli, and an assertion that Aggie's absence from the choir was due to unsuitable clothes. And both tears and scent being unbearable, she went back with quite a large bundle of garments which had belonged to a merry English boy who had come out to join his parents, only to die of enteric fever. "Give them away in charity, my dear," the father had said in a hard voice; "the boy would have liked it best himself." So the mother, with hopeless tears over the scarce-worn things, had sent them over to the chaplain for his poor.

Thus it happened that before Kabootri had recovered from her intense delight at the cap, Mrs. Gibbs was

laying out a beautiful suit, cut in the latest fashion, to await Aggie's return from one of those absences which had become so alarmingly frequent. There was a brand-new red tie, also a pair of lavender gloves, striped socks, and patent-leather pumps. To crown all, there was a note on highly-scented paper with an L on it in lilies of the valley, in which Mrs. Rosario and her daughters requested the pleasure of Mr. Agamemnon Menelaus Gibbs's company at a hop that evening. What more could a young man like Aggie want for his regeneration? Nothing apparently; it was impossible, for instance, to think of sitting on the steps with Kabootri in a suit made by an English tailor, a tall hat, and a pair of lavender kid gloves. Yet the fine feathers had to be worn when, in obedience to the R.S.V.P. in the corner of the scented note, he had to take over a reply in which Mr. Agamemnon Menelaus Gibbs accepted with pleasure, &c., &c.

"Oh, mamma!" said Miss Lily, who received the note in person with a giggle of admiration. "I do like him; he is quite the gentleman." The remark, being made before its object had left the tiny courtyard, which the Rosarios dignified by the name of compound, was quite audible, and a shy smile of conscious vanity overspread the lad's handsome face.

About the same time, that is to say when the sinking sun, still gloriously bright, had hidden itself behind the vast pile of the mosque so that it stood out in pale purple shadow against a background of sheer sunlight, Kabootri was curled up on a cornice with her back to one of the carved pilasters of a cupola, dreaming idly of Aga-Meean in his white and gold cap. He had not been to the steps that day, so from her airy perch she was keeping a watch for him; and as she watched, her clasp on the pigeon



she was caressing tightened unconsciously, till with a croon and a flutter it struggled for freedom. The sound brought other wings to wheel round the girl expectantly, for it was near the time for the birds' evening meal. Sharâfat-Nissa, the old canoness who lived on the roof below the marble cupolas, had charge of the store of grain set apart for the purpose by the guardians of the mosque; but as a rule Kabootri fed the pigeons. She did many such an odd job for the queer little cripple, half pensioner, half saint, who kept a Koran class for poor girls and combined it with a sort of matrimonial agency; for the due providing of suitable husbands to girls who have no relations to see after such things is a meritorious act of piety; a lucrative one also, when, as in Sharâfat-Nissa's case, you belong to a good family, and have a large connection in houses where a good-looking maiden is always in request as an extra wife. So, as she taught the Holy Book, her keen little eyes were always on the alert for a possible bride. They had been on Kabootri for a long time; hitherto, however, that idle, disreputable father down stairs had managed to evade the old canoness. But now that the great pigeon-race of the year was being decided on the grassy plain between the mosque and the fort, his last excuse would be gone; for he had all but promised that, if he lost, Sharâfat-Nissa should arrange the sale of the girl into some rich house, while if he won he had promised himself to give Kabootri, who in his way he really liked, a strapping young husband fit to please any girl; one who, being of her own caste, would allow her the freedom which she loved even as the birds loved it.

She, however, knew nothing of this compact. So when the great shout telling of victory went up from the

packed multitude on the plain, she only wondered with a smile if her father would be swaggering about with money to jingle in his pocket, or if she would have to cry, "I will kill, I will kill," a little oftener than usual. Sharâfat-Nissa heard the shout also, and, as she rocked backwards and forwards over her evening chant of the Holy Book, gave a covetous upward glance at the slender figure she could just see among the wings of the doves. Down-stairs among the packed multitudes, the shout which told him of defeat made the bird-catcher also, reprobate as he was, look up swiftly to the great gateway which was fast deepening to purple as the sun behind it dipped closer to the horizon; for one could always tell where Kabootri was by the wheeling wings.

"Have a care!" he said fiercely to the discreetly-veiled figure that evening as it sate behind the narrow slit of a door blocking the narrow stair, which Kabootri trod so often on her way to and from the roof. "Have a care, sister! She is not easily limed or netted." A sort of giggle came from the veil. "Yea, brother! Girls are all so, but if the cage is gilt—"

It was just a week after this, and the sunlight behind the shadow of the mosque was revelling in the sheeny iridescence of her tattered silk bodice, that Kabootri's figure showed clear and defiant against the sky, as she stood on the uppermost, outermost coping of the gateway. There was a sheer fall beneath her to the platform below. She had just escaped from the room where she had been caged like any bird for three whole days, and the canoness on the roof below was looking up at her prisoner helplessly.

"Listen, my pigeon, my beloved!" she wheedled breathlessly. "Come down, and let us talk it over together."

"Open the door, I say," came the shrill young voice. "Open, or I kill myself! Open, or I kill!"

"Heart's blood, listen! He shall be a young man, a handsome man."

Handsome, young! Was not Aga-Meean young? Was he not handsome? The thought made her voice shriller, clearer. "Open the door, or I kill! Open, or I take life!" The words were the words of the young tiger-cat that had been wont to startle the sunshine and the shadow, making Sri Parasnâth seek his cash-box incontinently; but there was a new note of appeal in their determination; for if it was but three days since she had been caged, it was six since she had seen Aga-Meean. What had become of him? Had he sought and missed her? Had he not?

"Listen, my bird," came the wheedling voice; "come down and listen. Kabootri! I swear that if thou likest not this one, I will let thee go and seek another. I swear it, child."

The sidling feet edged nearer along the coping, for this respite would at least give time. "Swear it on the Holy Book. So—in thy right hand and in thy left. Let me see it." She stretched her own hands out over the depths, and at the sight the expectant pigeons came wheeling round her.

"I swear by God and His prophet," began the old canoness gabbling as fast as she could over the oath; but above her breathless mumble came a little shriek, a little giggle, and a girl's voice from below. "Ah, Mr.

Gibbs! You are so naughty, so very naughty!"

Kabootri could not understand the words, but the giggle belongs to all tongues, and it jarred upon her passion, her despair. She looked down, and saw a well-known figure, changed utterly by a familiar, yet unfamiliar, dress. She saw two girls about her own age, with tiny waists, huge sleeves, and hats. It was Aga-Meean, escorting the two Miss Rosarios, who had expressed a desire to see the mosque. And she saw something else; she saw the look which the prettiest of the two girls gave to Aga-Meean; she saw the look he gave in return. Her sidling feet paused; she swayed giddily.

"Kabootri! Kabootri!" called the woman on the roof, eagerly, anxiously, "I have sworn it. Come down, my pigeon; come down, my dove! It makes me dizzy."

So that was Aga-Meean! The mistress said sooth; the wings made one dizzy, the wings,—the wings of a dove.

She had them! For the wind caught the wide folds of her veil, and claimed a place in the wide, fluttering sheen of her bodice, as she fell, and fell, and fell, down from the marble cupolas, past the purple shadow of the great gateway, to the wide platform where the doves are bought and sold. And some of the pigeons followed her, and some sate sidling on the coping, calling *Ka-boo-tri, ka-boo-tri!* But those of them who knew her best fled affrighted into the golden halo of sunshine behind the rose-red pile.

## BRITISH GUIANA.

BRITISH GUIANA ! Where is it, and what is it like ? This is a question with which few troubled themselves until the newspapers, in accents of astonishment and dread, told of the possibility of war between Great Britain and the United States. That possibility has not yet been wholly removed. The political situation, so far as the Press and the public can know, remains as it was when despatches were first exchanged between Lord Salisbury and Mr. Olney, and when the Presidential message was delivered. The publication of the DOCUMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO THE QUESTION OF BOUNDARY BETWEEN BRITISH GUIANA AND VENEZUELA, as the Blue Book is officially styled, is purely a statement of the British case. As such it may help the United States to understand what the British claim is, and upon what historical and other evidence it is based ; but of itself, it makes no change in the actual position of affairs. When it is exactly known what course the negotiations have taken since President Cleveland launched his bolt against this country, comment upon the issues of diplomacy may be useful. At the present time, however, words on these issues could be only of the order that darkens counsel and embitters controversy. This article, therefore, will ignore politics so far as may be, and, in its general scope, will be limited to a statement of facts about Guiana and its inhabitants, written from the standpoint of one who is not unfamiliar with the country and its resources.

The early history of Guiana is enshrouded in obscurity, and is a theme upon which much learning might be expended and many ingenious, and wholly unwarrantable, conclusions drawn. It is not even certainly known with whom the honour of discovery rests ; but the balance of probability seems to give it to Alonso de Ojeda, who, in company with Americus Vesputius, landed somewhere on the coast of Surinam, or Dutch Guiana, in the summer of 1499. It seems at any rate to be certain that the first colonists were Dutchmen. In 1580 a party of Zeelanders effected a settlement near the Pomeroon, and shortly afterwards on the banks of the Essequibo. The English did not make their way there till fifteen years later, when Raleigh led his first expedition to the Orinoco. Hume characterised his charming narrative as full of the grossest and most palpable lies ; but in describing what he saw, as distinct from what he heard, Raleigh told no lies. His geographical and other observations have been amply borne out by subsequent travellers, and the gold that is now being found in the region to some extent, at least, justifies his glowing belief in the richness of the country. His idea, the reader will remember, was that Elizabeth should take possession of the whole of Guiana, should become mistress of the entire region between the Orinoco and the Amazon ; but the great Queen let the opportunity pass, and the Empire of Guiana was not added to her dominions. Raleigh's second voyage, in 1617, ended disastrously on the scaffold

in Palace Yard. With his death England's association with Guiana came to an end, not to be renewed, and then only as an incidental consequence of European wars, until 1781, save for a small settlement established by Lord Willoughby, in the reign of Charles the Second, at Surinam, which was bought back by the Crown and given to the Dutch in exchange for what is now the State of New York. From 1580, however, the time of the first Dutch settlement on the Pomeroon, until 1781, the Zeelanders established small colonies along the rivers which break the coast line of what is now British, Dutch, and French Guiana, and ascended the highways into the interior. Two facts as regards the section of Guiana which is now British are quite clear. These are, that the Dutch held a mart for slaves at the mouth of the Orinoco, at Barima Point; and that they penetrated into the basin of the Cuyuni River in the north-west, for the sites of their forts may still be seen. In 1781 Great Britain took possession of all the Dutch colonies in the West Indies and on the mainland of South America, but restored them at the Peace of Versailles two years later. Henceforward up to 1803 Guiana was in a perpetual state of transition, now Dutch, now French, now English, and never long under either flag. But when the great war broke out in 1803 the Dutch ceded the three counties of Berbice, Demerara, and Essequibo to the British, in whose hands they have since remained, the last transfer being finally ratified by the treaty with Holland in 1814. The practical result of all these wars and treaties has been that the country now is, and has been during this century, held in three sections,—British Guiana from the Orinoco to the Corentyn, Dutch Guiana from the Corentyn to the Mariwini, and French Guiana from the Mariwini

to the debateable land where Captain Lunier was shot down last year when sent to restore order among the Brazilian desperadoes who follow the leadership of Cabral. Mention of this last circumstance reminds us of the fact that France has a boundary dispute with Brazil, closely analogous to that of Great Britain with Venezuela; a dispute, too, in which the Monroe doctrine, as it appears to be understood by President Cleveland, is equally at stake. But that is not a matter which can now be discussed. In concluding this brief historical summary two points should be particularly remembered: first, that when Great Britain finally took over the three counties of Berbice, Demerara, and Essequibo, she necessarily acquired all the country which the Dutch held; and secondly, that as the Republic of Venezuela did not come into existence until 1836 (that at least was the year of its diplomatic recognition by Great Britain), the British title to the area in dispute is long antecedent to any advanced by Venezuela. Venezuela's claim is only tenable on the assumption that the successful rebels were the inheritors of what Spain had possessed, and not merely of the territory which the rebels then actually commanded by occupation. Now, as to how far Spain had possessed land lower down the shoulder of South America than the Orinoco, and as to how far the Dutch had pushed their way north-westward to the Orinoco, are matters of fact too complex for brief elucidation. The curious reader cannot do better than study them, and the accompanying maps, in the aforesaid Blue Book.

Guiana is a country of mountain and valley, of rolling downs and limitless savannahs, of broad belts of primeval forest, of noble rivers and innumerable rivulets and creeks, the interior sparsely inhabited by nomadic

and peaceful tribes of red men now fast becoming extinct. That part of the country which has been in British possession since the final surrender by the Dutch lies between the Orinoco and the Corentyn, the latter being the boundary of Surinam, or Dutch Guiana. Its extreme north-westerly limit starts at a point at the mouth of the Orinoco, strikes southward along the course of the Amacura, then in a north-westerly direction runs parallel with the Orinoco, leaving a wide belt between it and the river-bank. Before it strikes the Caroni, which flows into the Orinoco, the line makes a sharp bend southward until it reaches a range of mountains culminating in the famous Roraima. Thence it follows the river Cotinga and Takuta until it takes in the headwaters of the Essequibo; this done, an eastward line to the headwaters of the Corentyn concludes the interior boundary. The line thus traced from the British frontier station at the mouth of the Orinoco to the Roraima range represents the extreme limit of the British claim. The true limit (what Lord Salisbury calls the "irreducible minimum") follows the Amacura river and the Imataka range until it strikes the Cuyuni, thence following the course of that river and the Yuruan until it touches the range which ends in Mount Roraima. A large pear-shaped area is thus left between the irreducible minimum and the extreme British claim; and this is the area which the British Government admits is so far open to dispute that it may fairly form the subject of arbitration. It is the area within the irreducible minimum, or the Schomburgk line, which Lord Salisbury has so far declined to submit to arbitration, for the reasons set forth in his second despatch to Mr. Olney. Now the Venezuela claim follows the coast from the mouth of the Orinoco to

Cape Nassau, creeps behind the settled districts unquestionably cultivated by the Dutch as far back as the end of the sixteenth century, and thence marches with the Essequibo to its source. This claim, if held to be good, would deprive British Guiana of more than two-thirds of its area, and would reduce the colony to a relatively insignificant strip between the rivers Essequibo and Corentyn. The country within the line of the irreducible minimum, and excluding the pear-shaped tract with respect to which Great Britain is alone willing to arbitrate, is, roughly, as large as Great Britain and Ireland. It will thus be seen that Venezuela claims not only the pear-shaped tract but the area as large as Great Britain, leaving us a strip no larger than Ireland. This explanation will reveal the real magnitude of the issues at stake. From the point of view of the United States, assuming that the Presidential message implies a belief in the validity of the Venezuelan claim, it seems that Great Britain has extended her dominion in South America by an area as large as herself. And from the British point of view it seems that the United States are siding with Venezuela in seeking to deprive Great Britain, not only of the pear-shaped tract which she is willing to throw into the crucible of arbitration, but of the largest and richest part of her colony. Now if, on the one hand, there is any virtue in the new reading of the Monroe doctrine, and if, on the other, Great Britain is determined to maintain the integrity of her Empire and not to allow the dismemberment of Guiana in the interest of the neighbouring State of Venezuela, it will be obvious that the political situation is one of great difficulty and danger. At present, however, it would be unwise to say more than that. In the absence of definite informa-



tion as to the course of negotiations, and in obedience to the strong desire expressed by Government that nothing should be written calculated to revive the feeling of hostility in the United States, it is not permissible to do more than express a hope that the diplomatists will find a means of settlement which will leave British Guiana intact, at least as to the whole of the territory within the irreducible minimum.

The country is roughly divisible into three zones. First comes the level mud flat, twenty miles or more in width, formed by the soil brought down from the great rivers and edged with a thick belt of tall *courida* bush and mangrove. This belt is the natural sea-wall of the country. It extends in almost unbroken line from the Amazon to the Orinoco, and against its matted frontage the Atlantic rollers are beaten into foam and spray. Beyond the mud flats are long, low, irregular reefs of white quartz sand, sometimes rising into hillocks of from fifty to eighty feet high. These formed the original coast-line. The intervening stretch of rich black soil, sand and clay and vegetable deposit brought down by the rivers, represents the encroachment of the earth upon the sea. The process goes on incessantly. The rivers are so surcharged with alluvial that the sea for fifty miles from the coast is dark and turbid; and as the alluvial settles and the mud banks are extended, so the *courida* bush moves forward, ever reclaiming the new foreshore and waging war with the incoming tide. Now and again, in times of gale, the rollers tear up the matted roots and make a great gap in the natural fascines; but, though there may be isolated defeats, the general tendency is that of victory for the land. Thus have the mud flats been formed, the deposit a hundred feet or more in thick-

ness; a wondrously rich soil for the sugar-cane, a poor foundation for heavy buildings, but a perfect buffer during seismological disturbances. Beyond the sand-reefs come the formations of primary and metamorphic rocks, granitic rocks and ranges of sandstone mountains, rising by terraces into an elevated tableland of savannah. Where the mud flats end the great belts of forest begin, stretching for a hundred and fifty miles or more inland and forming towering walls of timber and foliage along the great waterways. The river system is on the grand scale peculiar to tropical America. The country, in fact, is cut up into innumerable islets grouped about the courses of the largest streams, the Essequibo, the Demerara, the Berbice, and the Corantyn. The finest river is the Essequibo, into which flow the magnificent waters of the Cuyuni and the Mazaruni, forming a confluence at Bartica Point over four miles broad, the stream then widening out through its subsequent course of sixty miles into an estuary twenty miles from bank to bank. The Essequibo rises in the Acaroi mountains, forty miles north of the Equator, and tears a sinuous way through and down the terraced surface for a distance of over six hundred miles. It is not navigable for steamers much beyond Bartica Point, and the farther it is explored the higher, grander, more beautiful, and more dangerous become the rapids. One of its tributaries, the Potaro, which joins it about one hundred and fifty miles from the coast, has a waterfall surpassing Niagara in height. This is the Kaieteur Fall (the Old Man's Fall, to translate the Indian name), which was discovered by Mr. Brown, who made a geological survey for the Government a quarter of a century ago. At this point the Potaro falls over a sandstone tableland pre-

cipitously for seven hundred and forty-one feet, and then over a sloping cataract of eighty-one feet into a great rocky basin. In flood-time the width of the fall is about three hundred and seventy feet, and in the dry season two hundred and forty feet or less. "If," says Mr. im Thurn, "the whole valley of the Potaro is fairyland, then the Kaieteur ravine is the very pene-tralia of fairyland. . . . Crossing the savannah we soon reached the Kaieteur cliffs. Lying at full length on the ground, head over the edge of the cliff, I gazed down. Then, and then only, the splendid and, in the most solemn sense of the word, awful beauty of the Kaieteur burst upon me. Seven hundred and fifty feet below, encircled in black boulders, lay a black pool into which the column of white water, graceful as the ceaseless flight of innumerable rockets, thundered from by my side. Behind the Fall, through the thinnest parts of the veil of foam and mist, a great black cavern made the white of the water still more white." The renowned traveller saw it some years afterwards and in time of flood. An indescribably vast curtain of waters, he says (some four hundred feet wide), "rolled over the top of the cliff, retaining its full width until it crashed into the boiling water of the pool which filled the whole space below; and at the surface of this pool itself only the outer edge was visible, for the greater part was beaten and hurled up in a great high mass of surf and foam and spray."<sup>1</sup>

The Berbice comes next in size to the Essequibo; it is tidal, and navigable for vessels of a twelve feet draught to a distance of over a hundred miles. From its source it runs for many leagues almost parallel with the upper Essequibo, now confined between high gorges, now spreading

out into broad expanses, now racing over cataracts as it crosses the great bed of rock that runs athwart the shoulder of the continent. The Demerara divides the section of the country between the Berbice and the Essequibo. It is nearly two miles wide at the mouth, a dark muddy volume of water, running like a millstream as the tide goes out. This river is navigable for large vessels for over seventy miles, and its upper course is scarcely known to any but Indian boatmen and a handful of adventurous miners who have found gold beyond the Mora rapids. The Dutch boundary river, the Corentyn, takes its rise about twenty-five miles east of the headwaters of the Essequibo, and flows over a series of splendid cataracts whose supremacy in point of grandeur and beauty was unchallenged until the discovery of the Kaieteur. It is navigable for about one hundred and fifty miles. Besides these there are the Rupununi, whose white waters thread their way over the elevated tableland and through the vast savannahs, and fall into the Essequibo at a point over two hundred and fifty miles from the sea; the Barima and the Barama, making easily navigable highways from the coast to the northwest; the Pomeroon, the Mahaica, the Mahaicony, and the Abary, all rivers compared with which our island streams are insignificant.

Of the High Woods, the dense primeval forests of tropical America, many, from Humboldt downwards, have written, and written well; yet mere words can never adequately render their grand, mysterious beauty. The brush, in the hand of genius, might succeed; the pen must inevitably fail. It is of little service to tell of giant stems rising to a height of two hundred feet or more before they put forth their strong interlacing branches. The bare statement of the

<sup>1</sup> AMONG THE INDIANS OF GUIANA, by E. F. im Thurn (1883).

fact conveys no idea of the massive nobility, the columnar dignity and grace of their trunks. They shoot straight upwards in grand and crowded array, the pillars of a dense roof of dark green foliage; and from their branches hang festoons of bush rope, in strenuous, though invisible combat, one with the other, to reach the soil, even as the great trees are in similar combat to force their way up into the sunlight and the air. So thickly matted is the roof of branch and leaf, of pendulous rope and ivy, that the light is dim. You may travel for days and never see the sun save for slanting shafts of burnished gold that pierce the interstices of this natural ceiling; or for occasional clearances where some old giant of the forest has fallen, crashing down all the weaker trees that could not withstand its weight. The atmosphere is almost intolerably hot and dank. The ground is encumbered with a dense undergrowth of bush, making progress painfully slow, even over an Indian trail. The silence, too, is as oppressive as the heat. Just before daybreak, in the ten minutes or so of half light, the forest will resound with the cries of monkeys and the notes of birds. As the sun rises over the woodland golden-breasted marmosets will leap from tree to tree; now and again a red-plumaged bird may dart like a flame through the leaves; a labba, a peccarie, a tapir, or possibly a puma, will crash through the undergrowth; but as the day wears on and the heat grows less endurable, these sights and sounds cease. All is still and silent. A large bright-hued butterfly may float lazily past; the solemn note of the bell-bird may echo in the groves; but these rare incidents of the forest noon-day seem but to intensify the motionless character of the scene, and deepen the sense of perfect solitude

and silence. It is much the same when travelling on the rivers and creeks. Rarely does the traveller on these winding streams get a clear stretch in front of him. He is on a wide avenue of water with high forest banks to right and left, with a great wall of trees behind him and another in front, a wall that gives way as the boat approaches the bend, and resolves itself into new forest banks with another wall of trees at the next turn of the stream. Not a sign of life will be seen, not a sound heard but the rhythmic stroke of the paddles. The creeks are of equal stillness and of unsurpassable loveliness, the cool brown waters covered with the queen of water lilies and over-arched with trees, festooned with lianas, creepers, and orchids. Often does a passage have to be forced with cutlasses through these meandering waterways. Every stroke of the paddles gives a new view and reveals a still more entrancing scene. It is toilsome work, no doubt, to get through these arched highways of the forest; but great is the reward to the lover of natural beauty. Splendidly is he compensated for his labour when the boat shoots out from beneath the interlaced roof of foliage and flowers into the sunlight that streams upon a wide lake in the open savannah, fringed by the forest belt, and with mountains mantled in blue haze, softly outlined against the horizon.

And what of the people of this interesting country? They number but two hundred and eighty-seven thousand, an infinitesimal proportion of what the area could support. When the Dutch went there in the sixteenth century, the forests were the home of large tribes of red Indians, who had probably found their way from the northern part of the continent along the chain of islands across the Caribbean sea. Now, however, there

are scarcely twenty thousand aborigines between the Orinoco and the Corentyn. The Caribs, the only warlike and courageous tribe among them, are practically extinct; the few who remain have lost their love of battle. There is no market for slaves such as that established by the Dutch nearly three hundred years ago on the Orinoco delta; and with the cessation of the trade in Indian labour for the Dutch plantations in the Pomeroon and Essequibo districts, the Caribs found their occupation gone. They have dwindled down to vanishing point. The diminishing tribes that remain are inoffensive, and as shy, too, as the animals whose forest habitation they share. They make magnificent boatmen and woodmen, threading their way through the intricacies of the forest with an ease incomprehensible to the European, a giant tree, a fallen trunk, a broken twig, their only landmarks. And they know the rivers as only the aborigine can know them. From them and from the forest they draw their food. In the woodlands, when they form a settlement, they clear a tiny patch and cultivate cassava, from the root of which they make large, thin cakes, which answer to the white man's bread. The men hunt the labba in the forest, or spear and net fish in the rivers; while the women weave hammocks, tend the cassava field, and make *paiwarrie*, an intoxicant from the fermented juice of the cassava root. The process of manufacture is disgusting, the root being masticated by the women and spat into a large vessel. It is not a strong intoxicant: much has to be drunk before an hilarious effect is produced; but the Indian is capable of taking an unlimited quantity, and still deserves Raleigh's description of him as a "marvellous great drunkard." And since they have been brought into contact with Europeans they have learned the

qualities of more fiery spirits than the cassava root will yield; they have learned some of the white man's tastes, and with them some of his diseases, rapidly hastening their extinction as a race. Many of those who keep to the river banks and about the wood-cutting grants have an admixture of negro blood. They are useful because of their knowledge of the cataracts and Indian trails, and they now find abundant employment as bowmen and boatmen for the gold-hunters. But they are a people who will not continue in the land; they will be merged into the hybrid population of the country. The true Indian will go farther inland before the steady advance of civilisation. He shrinks from European contact, a veritable child of nature, of an impenetrable reserve, full of superstitious dreads, peopling every mountain, river, and forest-grove with spirits, and utterly unable to adapt himself to any conditions other than those of the nomad. Before many generations are passed there will be no other evidence of the Indian occupants of Guiana than the mysterious and indecipherable picture-writing wrought by remote ancestors upon the great boulders of the river cataracts.

The general population of Guiana is indeed a motley gathering; something under five thousand Europeans; about twelve thousand Portuguese from the Cape de Verde Islands and Madeira; over one hundred thousand coolies from India, and nearly four thousand Chinese brought under indenture to work on the sugar-estates; more than one hundred thousand blacks, descendants of West African negroes brought by the slave-traders; and about thirty thousand people of mixed race. The grand total in 1891, including the nomadic Indians, was something over two hundred and eighty-eight thousand. Nearly all

these people are at present confined to the coast. The majority of them are employed on the sugar-estates on the banks of the Demerara and the Berbice, and on the flats near the mouths of the rivers. In "de old Testament time," as the negroes say, (meaning thereby the days of the Dutch possession, or any time before the abolition of slavery) planting was carried on in the interior lands, cotton and coffee heading the list of exports. But when the sugar-cane began to be grown the Dutch colonists found the alluvial an ideal soil for it. A level surface, too, was the natural *habitat* of the Dutchman. He liked it all the better for being a few feet below high tide; it gave him opportunities to exercise his ingenuity in building walls to keep out the sea, in cutting canals, and constructing *kokers* and dams for navigation and drainage. When the British took over the colony they looked upon it simply as a huge sugar-estate, caring nothing for the potentialities of the interior. A sugar-estate was then a gold-mine to its fortunate owner, and to those who managed it for him while he lived at his ease in England. There was no incentive to leave the flats and push beyond the sand-reefs and forest-belt to the mountainous table-land. Cheap labour was the great object always in view, and the colony was for decades governed for the purpose of providing such labour for the planters. On the abolition of slavery the negroes took advantage of their freedom to work when they chose. They had neither the enterprise nor the courage to move into the interior; they squatted contentedly in villages on the mud flats, within reach of the sugar-estates, where they could be sure of getting one or two days' work a week, which brought them in abundance for their simple wants. The planters soon found that this inter-

mittent labour-supply was insufficient. They brought in immigrants from the West India islands, liberated negroes from West Africa and the Brazils, and Chinese coolies from the Far East. This last importation ceased, however, when a stipulation was made in a convention between Great Britain and China, declaring that all such immigrants should be entitled to a return passage at the end of their term of service. The planters thought the burden of cost too heavy, and discontinued the introduction of Chinese; unfortunately so, for the Chinaman is a capital agricultural labourer in the tropics, is a valuable consumer of commodities, and, when free to use his faculties for his own advantage, is a source of wealth to a sparsely inhabited country. With China practically closed to them the planters then turned their eyes upon India, and for nearly a quarter of a century there has been a brisk traffic between Guiana and the East Indies. The coolies sign for five years' service, with the right of claiming a free passage home for themselves and their families then or at any later time. Many remain; but an average of two thousand men, women, and children return yearly, with their accumulated savings in the form of jewellery and gold pieces. The annual cost of this immigration is about £100,000, two-thirds being borne by the planters, and one-third by the colony; and the effect of it has been to keep labour fairly cheap. The policy of the planters also was to confine the negro to the coast, for his superior physical strength made him almost indispensable for certain heavy work in the cane-fields, so long as it could be bought at a low figure; and they accordingly set their faces against all projects for opening the interior which would have taken the population away from the mud flats. That policy has, however, worn



itself out. The rise of the beet-sugar industry in Europe, unfairly fostered by heavy bounties, has made the cultivation of cane so hazardous and unprofitable that it is doubtful whether planting can continue in Demerara. But whether its days be few or many the planter has now a sufficiency of indentured coolie labour; and the rest of the population, the free coolies, the negroes, and the mixed races, find themselves compelled to turn to other pursuits.

Fortunately a new channel has been opened to them by the rediscovery of gold in the interior. "No man in Europe believes in the wealth of Guiana," wrote Humboldt nearly a century ago; but many men believe in it now, in Europe and elsewhere. The initiation came from Cayenne, a black native of French Guiana prospecting in the Essequibo with marked success. In 1884 two hundred and fifty ounces of gold were exported; by 1893 the tale has risen to nearly one hundred and forty-three thousand ounces. There has been a slight decrease since; but fluctuations are inevitable in placer mining, and a trifling fall has no real bearing upon the auriferous nature of the country. All the gold hitherto obtained has been washed from the soil under unskilled management and by labourers who have had to learn their work. The quartz has not yet been touched. Indeed only in a few insignificant patches has the country been prospected. The region between the Essequibo and the Corentyn has scarcely been touched; nearly all the gold has come from the upper reaches of the Barima and from a few spots along the courses of the Cuyuni, the Mazaruni, the Essequibo, and the Potaro. When capital and skilled direction are brought into the country, as they will be so soon as the political difficulty is disposed of and the north-

western boundary definitely fixed, Guiana will probably become one of the most attractive gold-fields in the British Empire. Then the population will inevitably drift inland. Only the mercantile and official classes will remain in Georgetown, the capital; and only the coolies whose labour contracts are unexpired will be left upon the sugar-estates. The population will have to be reinforced with negroes from the West Indies and coolies from the East: townships and farms will spring up in the interior wherever mining settlements are established; and the country will undergo a transformation such as, in due time and granting the continued existence of gold in paying quantities, should make it one of the richest provinces of the Empire. When the drift quartz comes to be crushed, when shafts are sunk in the numerous reefs, when operations are conducted on such a scale as Mr. Chamberlain evidently contemplates by offering concessions of territory on specially favourable terms,<sup>1</sup> then Guiana will be within measurable distance of realising the dreams of Raleigh when he urged Elizabeth to take possession of the whole country between the Amazon and the Orinoco.

Something should be said, in conclusion, about the climate, which has been badly maligned. It is no worse and no better than that of any other primeval tropical tract. Malarial fevers exist, of course: they are inevitable in the tropics; but severe attacks may certainly be avoided by prudent living. If a European, fresh from home, walks about at noonday without an umbrella, or works at a paddle with the Indian boatmen on the rivers, or indulges in other continuous exertion without protection from the sun, the chances are that he

<sup>1</sup> See his despatch of September 7th, 1895, to the then Governor of the Colony.

will get an attack of malarial fever; and he deserves to get it for his folly. But if he takes life easily, has a sufficiency of good nourishing food, and as little alcohol as possible, he may live to a ripe old age with nothing worse than an occasional feverish cold. It is an absolute error to call the country a pestiferous fever-den. The impression has probably arisen from the occasional appearance of yellow fever in an epidemic form. Now yellow fever is a very terrible malady, striking fear to the boldest heart by the rapidity with which it carries off its victims; but it is no more terrible than small-pox, and an epidemic of the disease is about as rare in Guiana as small-pox is in the better quarters of London. It has not been known in the country since 1881, and then it was imported; it appears only at long intervals, and when it does appear is confined to the mouths of the rivers, rarely extending inland. Every one who has been in the interior, and knows how to travel in equatorial regions, testifies to the salubrity of the climate, where the great heat of the sun is tempered by the pleasant and continuous breeze from the sea. No European can, of course, labour in the tropics as he can in his own latitudes. If he attempts to do so nature will chastise him for his temerity by an attack of fever,

which may be so mild as to be almost imperceptible to him, or so frequently recurrent as to ruin his constitution, or so severe as to lay him in his grave in forty-eight hours. But it is not the climate that deserves blame so much as the misuse of it by men whose bodily energy outstrips their discretion, or their knowledge of the laws of health. One great cause of disease is certainly almost wholly avoided in Guiana, save, perhaps, on the higher savannahs; there are no violent alternations of temperature. "There is probably no country on the globe," says Dr. Hancock, who lived in Demerara for five-and-twenty years, "where the temperature is more uniform than in Guiana." The variation of the thermometer is from 72° to 87° (Fahrenheit), and even in the savannahs the thermal range is merely from 66° at night to 88° in the day. The annual rainfall varies from seventy to one hundred and thirty inches, and in the wet season it will, as in all tropical countries, rain sometimes for days together. But wet or dry, fever or no fever, the climate of Guiana is delightful. It is one to which all who have ever known it long at times to return, and with a longing that is irresistible when the great cities of England are enveloped in the poisonous fogs of winter.



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[One Shilling

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE

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## Contents

	PAGE
I—STEPHANIE DE LIANCOURT . . . . .	401
II—THE FATHER OF THE BRITISH NAVY . . . . .	420
III—A DAY ON THE YELLOW CLAY . . . . .	427
IV—THE STORY OF A TIN MINE . . . . .	435
V—UNFINISHED BOOKS . . . . .	444
VI—THE FIFTY DAYS . . . . .	454
VII.—THE WINGS OF A DOVE . . . . .	462
VIII—BRITISH GUYANA . . . . .	471

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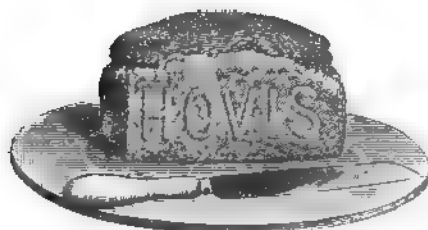
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## Contents

	PAGE
1.—Stephanie de Liancourt . . . . .	401
2.—The Father of the British Navy . . . . .	420
3.—A Day on the Yellow Clay . . . . .	427
4.—The Story of a Tin Mine . . . . .	435
5.—Unfinished Books . . . . .	444
6.—The Forty Days . . . . .	454
7.—The Wings of a Dove . . . . .	462
8.—British Guiana. . . . .	471

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4.—The Story of a Tin Mine . . . . .	435
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CONTENTS OF THE BOOK.

Chapter.	FIRST PART.	Page.
I.	The Principle of Investment ... ..	1
II.	Investment and Speculation... ..	5
III.	Investment ... ..	9
IV.	Speculative Investment ... ..	14
V.	Speculation ... ..	28
VI.	Permanent Speculation ... ..	32
VII.	Temporary Speculation ... ..	40
	SECOND PART.	
VIII.	Companies and Stocks and Shares ... ..	45
IX.	The Stock Exchange ... ..	54
X.	Prices of Stocks ... ..	61
XI.	Stock Exchange Book-keeping ... ..	69
XII.	Another Mode of Settlement .. ...	82
	THIRD PART.	
XIII.	Success in Stock Operation .. ...	98
XIV.	Apathy of Investors ... ..	107
XV.	Profits <i>versus</i> Dividends ... ..	114
XVI.	How to make your own Dividend ... ..	122
XVII.	No Permanent Investments ... ..	130
XVIII.	Second-hand Shares ... ..	137
XIX.	Fluctuations in Prices ... ..	144
XX.	No Haggling ... ..	150
XXI.	Moral from a Baby Panic ... ..	155
	FOURTH PART.	
XXII.	The Clever Investor ... ..	163
XXIII.	Ideal Management of Capital ... ..	165
XXIV.	A Good Jobber ... ..	171
XXV.	An Investment Register ... ..	177
	APPENDIX.	
	'A.B.C.' of the Stock Exchange ... ..	183
	Giving a definition of all technical expressions used in money market articles.	
	Highest and Lowest Prices of all Principal Stocks from 1881 to 1894 inclusive ... ..	204
	Table of Dividends Paid on the Principal Stocks from 1881 to 1894 ... ..	218



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